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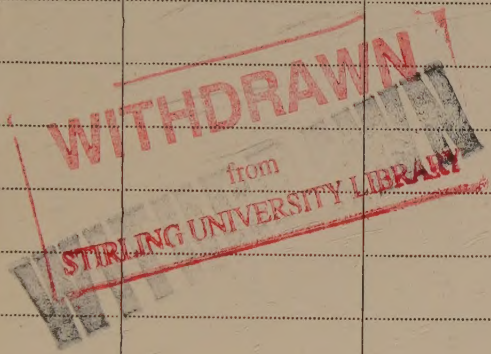

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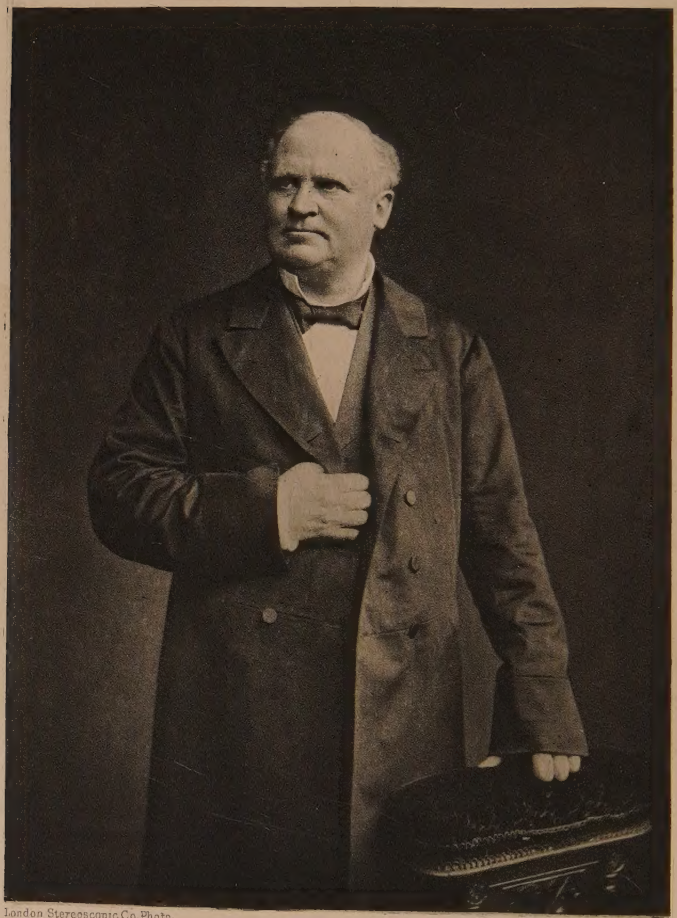

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SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

OF

Stanley (Edward Henry)
15th Earl of Derby

EDWARD HENRY XV^TH EARL OF DERBY

K.G.

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

SIR T. H. SANDERSON, K.C.B. AND E. S. ROSCOE

Edward Stanley

WITH A PREFATORY MEMOIR

BY W. E. H. LECKY

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE SPEECHES contained in these volumes have been selected from those which Lord DERBY delivered out of Parliament from his entrance into public life to his death. They are published by his Widow, in the belief that Lord DERBY'S observations and conclusions, the result of careful study, may still be of use to the country which in his lifetime it was his principal ambition to serve. In accordance with her wishes the editors have endeavoured to restrict the selection to such speeches as are of general and present interest, and to eliminate from these, so far as might be compatible with their aim and structure, any portions which dealt with points of purely temporary or local importance. The greater number of the Speeches here published will therefore be found to relate to what are popularly termed social subjects, upon which Lord DERBY'S words are unquestionably valuable and suggestive.

T. H. S.
E. S. R.

April 1894.

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PREFATORY MEMOIR

THE time has not yet arrived for the publication of a full biography of the late Lord Derby, but in submitting to the public a collection of his more important speeches outside Parliament, a short sketch of the chief features of his life and character may not be out of place.

Edward Henry, fifteenth Earl of Derby, was born July 21, 1826, and was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he obtained a first class in classics. In March, 1848, he unsuccessfully contested Lancaster, and soon after started for a long and instructive journey in America and the West Indies. During his absence from England he was elected member for Lynn Regis upon the death of Lord George Bentinck in September 1848, and he held this seat without interruption till his accession to the earldom in October 1869. His first speech in the House of Commons was delivered on May 31, 1850, on the sugar duties. The effect on the West Indies of the abolition of the preferential duty on sugar was a subject which he had specially studied during his journey, and he had published a pamphlet upon it. Sir Robert Peel warmly praised his maiden speech, and Greville describes the great impression which it made—an

impression which a further knowledge of the speaker speedily confirmed.

The appearance in Parliament of the eldest son of one of the most brilliant party leaders of the age could scarcely fail to be a considerable political event, and it was soon found that the new member was not only a man of rare ability, but was also in nearly all respects very unlike his illustrious father. Never was there a more striking instance of that strange freak of heredity by which an able son is sometimes much less the continuation than the complement of an able father, exhibiting in strongly contrasted lights both opposite qualities and opposite defects. The fourteenth Earl was a great orator. He was one of the greatest debaters who have ever lived. He was a party leader of extraordinary power, delighting in political conflict; throwing into it much of the fire and passion which he displayed in his sporting contests; little fitted to conciliate opponents, but eminently fitted to win the enthusiastic loyalty of his followers, to rally a dispirited minority, to lead a party attack. His keen and rapid judgment; his perfect command of pure and lucid English; his unfailing readiness in argument, invective, sarcasm and repartee; his indomitable courage, and the somewhat imperious dignity of his manner, all marked him out for the position which he held. If there was some truth in the common taunt that he was more a party leader than a statesman, it must at least be remembered that he has identified his name with several important measures, and that during most of his career he was in a hopeless minority. His enemies accused him of rashness, arrogance, and some superficiality both of thought and knowledge. They

alleged that he carried too much of the sporting spirit into politics; that his naturally excellent judgment was often deflected by the passions of the fray; that he was accustomed to judge measures more by their party advantages than by their intrinsic merits, and to care more for an immediate triumph than for ultimate results.

His son was made in a very different mould. Though, like most able and clear-headed men, he acquired by much practice a respectable facility in purely extemporaneous argument, he was never a great debater. His speeches were very carefully prepared, and, as the present volumes will, I think, show, they possessed conspicuous merits of form as well as of matter; but they were not the speeches of a brilliant orator. No one could reason more clearly, more powerfully, or more persuasively. He was a supreme master of terse, luminous, weighty and accurate English. He had much skill in bringing into vivid relief the salient points of an obscure and complicated subject, condensing an argument into a phrase, and illustrating it by graphic felicities of language that clung to the memory. But he hated rhetoric. His enunciation was faulty and unimpressive. He appealed solely to the reason, and never to passion or to prejudice, and he had nothing of the fire and temperament of a party orator. Very few politicians mastered so thoroughly the subjects with which they dealt. No politician of his time retained so remarkably, amid party conflicts, the power of judging questions from all their sides; of balancing judicially opposing considerations; of looking beyond the passions and interests of the hour; of realising the points of view of those to whom he was opposed. Declama-

tion, claptrap, evasion, ambiguities of thought and expression, empty plausibilities, unfair, partial, and exaggerated statements, were all essentially repugnant to that clear and sceptical intellect, to that sound, cautious, practical judgment. His business talents were very great, and they were assiduously cultivated. His appetite for work was insatiable. No one knew better how to administer a great department, or preside over a Parliamentary Committee, or arbitrate in a difficult controversy, or give wise and timely advice to an inexperienced organisation. It was in these fields that his influence was, perhaps, most deeply felt. His success in them did not depend merely on his unflagging industry and his excellent judgment; it was also largely due to his eminently conciliatory character. The uniform courtesy which he displayed to men of all ranks and opinions is happily no rare thing among his class; but every one who was brought in contact with Lord Derby soon felt that he was in the presence of one who tried to understand his position, to estimate his arguments at their full worth, to find some common ground of agreement. If it were possible in a bitter controversy to arrive at a reasonable compromise, Lord Derby was most likely to effect it. He had a curious talent of making speeches with which everyone must agree, and which at the same time were never commonplace. Their secret lay in the habit of mind that led him always to seek out the common grounds of principle or fact that underlie every controversy, and which in the heat of the conflict the disputants had often failed to recognise.

It was not difficult to forecast the place which a statesman of this kind was likely to fill in English

politics. He was plainly wanting in many of the qualities of a party leader, and in most of the qualities of a parliamentary gladiator, and he was not likely to succeed in all forms of statesmanship. He would certainly not prove

> A daring pilot in extremity,
> Pleased with the danger when the waves went high.

His clear perception of the objections to any course, combined with a very deep sense of responsibility, not unfrequently enfeebled his will in moments when bold and decisive action was required ; and there were times when the love of compromise which was so useful an element in his character seemed to his best friends too closely allied to weakness. But he probably saved every party with which he acted from many mistakes. He brought to every Government which he joined a very eminent administrative capacity. He defended every policy that he espoused with a persuasive reasoning that few men could equal. He was a supremely skilful detector of false weights and of false measures. Every fad, every newborn enthusiasm, every crude, ill-digested theory, found in him the calmest and most penetrating of critics, and he inspired the great body of moderate men of all parties with a deep confidence in his patriotism and in his judgment.

His political position was marked out by the fact that his father had recently broken away from the Whig connection which had hitherto been that of his family, and was now the leader of the Conservative party. The son naturally took his place under his father's banner ; but I much question whether he would have done so if no family influence had interfered. It

was not that he at any time changed considerably his views. As Macaulay has truly said, while the extremes of the two English parties are separated by a wide chasm, there is a frontier line where they almost blend; and Lord Derby, when a Conservative, always represented the Liberal, and when a Liberal the Conservative wing of his party. But his mind had much of the Whig character; his judgment was very independent, and on Church questions especially he was never fully in harmony with his party. He was appointed Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his father's first short ministry in March 1852, at a time when he was travelling in India, and he left office with his father in December of the same year. In 1853 he made a remarkable speech on Indian affairs, in some degree foreshadowing the Indian policy which he was afterwards destined to take such a large part in carrying into effect. During the next few years he spoke frequently on Indian and Colonial questions, on questions connected with education, factories, and other working-class interests, and he supported—often in opposition to the majority of his party—a large number of reforms which have since been accomplished. He advocated the introduction of competitive examinations, first of all into the Diplomatic, and then into most branches of the Civil Service. He spoke against the system of purchase in the Army, and served on a Royal Commission on the subject. He supported a motion for securing to married women their property and earnings. He took a decided part in opposition to Church rates. He voted for the emancipation of the Jews. He voted and spoke in favour of the Maynooth grant. He was an early advocate of the opening of museums on

Sundays, and of a conscience clause to be enforced in all schools receiving State assistance. He supported the establishment of the Divorce Court, and clearly showed that preference for social as distinguished from political questions which he retained through his whole life. He delighted in placing himself in touch with working men. Mechanics' institutes, free libraries, almost every movement for the education and improvement of the working class, found in him a steady friend. He once wrote to Lord Shaftesbury: 'We are both public men deeply interested in the condition of the working class, and for my own part I would rather look back on services such as you have performed for that class than receive the highest honours in the employment of the State.' On working-class questions he was often accused of Radicalism, but it was Radicalism of the old school, which relied mainly for reform on spontaneous effort, on moral improvement and extended education, and was very jealous of State interference, compulsion, and control. He had a great admiration for Mill's writings, and especially for his treatise on Liberty, which he described as 'one of the wisest books of our time.' Mill fully reciprocated the feeling. He once spoke of Lord Stanley as 'one of the very few English public men who hold that a politician's opinions ought to be founded on principles.'

'Our party,' wrote Lord Malmesbury in 1853, 'are angry with Disraeli, which is constantly the case, and they are also displeased with Lord Stanley, suspecting him to be coquetting with the Manchester party.' Greville, nearly at the same time, expressed his belief that Lord Stanley was taking 'a wise and liberal line,'

and that he was 'pretty sure to act a conspicuous part.' In November 1855 there was a critical moment in his career, when Lord Palmerston, on the death of Sir William Molesworth, offered Lord Stanley the post of Secretary of State for the Colonies. He at once went down to Knowsley to consult his father, who put a strong veto on the proposal, and the offer was refused, but in terms which showed that it had been far from unacceptable. It is probable that the refusal was a wise one; for although on many home questions Lord Stanley would have found himself more in harmony with moderate Liberals than with his own party, he would certainly have dissented from Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. During the Crimean War he seems to have sympathised with the views of Bright and Cobden. He took an active part in an able but now nearly forgotten Tory paper called 'The Press,' which was opposed to the war; and his extreme horror of war, and of every policy which could possibly lead to war, was one of his strongest characteristics. Responsibility in office never weighed lightly upon him, but responsibility for measures which led or might lead to bloodshed was more than he could bear.

At the time when this offer of Lord Palmerston was made, Lord Stanley was little more than twenty-nine. Greville considered that he had acted wisely in refusing, and he has given us an interesting account of the light in which the young statesman then appeared to experienced political judges. 'His position and abilities,' he said, 'are certain before long to make him conspicuous, and to enable him to play a very considerable part. He is exceedingly ambitious, of an independent turn of mind, very industrious, and has acquired a vast amount

of information. Not long ago Disraeli gave me an account of him and of his curious opinions—exceedingly curious in a man in his condition of life and with his prospects. Last night Lord Strangford (George Smythe) talked to me about him, expressed the highest opinion of his capacity and acquirements, and confirmed what Disraeli had told me of his notions and views even more; for he says that he is a real and sincere democrat, and that he would like if he could to prove his sincerity by divesting himself of his aristocratic character, and even of the wealth he is heir to. How far this may be true I know not. . . . Nothing appears to me certain, but that he will play a considerable part for good or for evil; but I cannot pretend to guess what it will be. At present he seems to be more allied with Bright than with any other public man, and as his disposition about the war and its continuance is very much that of Bright it would have been difficult for him to take office with Palmerston.'

Lord Stanley had not long to wait for high office. His father formed his second administration in February 1858, and Lord Stanley was made Colonial Secretary. He appears to have accepted the office with some reluctance, and only because Sir E. Bulwer, for whom it was at first intended, found that he could not secure his re-election. The Government was a very weak one, and it opened with the worst prospects. It was a Government in a minority. Its very existence depended on the dissensions between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, and its first steps met with little favour either in the House or in the country. The Indian Mutiny was now nearly suppressed, and Lord Palmerston shortly before quitting office had pledged the House of Commons to

the policy of withdrawing the Government of India from the East India Company and placing it directly under the Crown. To carry this policy into effect was the first task of the new Government. They introduced an Indian Bill which they were compelled to withdraw, and then substituted for it a new bill founded on resolutions which were carried through the House of Commons. In May, the Government almost fell on account of the indiscreet publication of a despatch of Lord Ellenborough, condemning a proclamation of the Governor-General, Lord Canning. A vote of censure was moved, and would certainly have been carried, if Lord Ellenborough had not saved his colleagues by resigning. He was president of the Board of Control, the office which then directed Indian affairs, and Lord Stanley took his place, piloted the Indian Bill successfully through the House of Commons, and, when the measure became law, was the first Secretary of State for India, and undertook the very important and responsible task of beginning the new system of Indian Government.

'The Times' noticed the singular good fortune of Lord Derby in being able at this very critical moment to place his eldest son in one of the most important Cabinet offices in his Ministry, without incurring from any side the smallest imputation of nepotism, and the skill and success of the new administration of the India Office was speedily and generally recognised. Greville tells us that Lord Stanley 'gained golden opinions and great popularity at the India House;' and he gives a striking instance of the firmness with which he maintained the full authority of the new Council over Indian affairs. He adds: 'I was prepared to hear of his ability, his indefatigable industry, and his business qualities;

but I was surprised to hear so much of his courtesy, affability, patience, and candour; that he is neither dictatorial nor conceited, always ready to listen to other people's opinions and advice, and never fancying that he knows better than anyone else. I afterwards told Jonathan Peel what I had heard, and he confirmed the truth of this report, and said he was the same in the Cabinet.' 'Lord Stanley,' Greville said, 'is so completely *the man* of the present day, and in all human probability is destined to play so important and conspicuous a part in political life, that the time may come when any details, however minute, of his early career will be deemed worthy of recollection.' It is a characteristic fact that Lord Stanley offered a seat on the Indian Council to John Stuart Mill, which, however, that great writer declined.

The disturbance in European politics which culminated in the French declaration of war against Austria contributed to weaken still further the feeble Ministry of Lord Derby. The Reform Bill caused profound divisions in its ranks. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley resigned, and the Government bill was defeated in the spring of 1859. Lord Malmesbury mentions that in the Cabinet divisions on that question Lord Stanley supported the more democratic view, and that on one occasion he threatened to resign if the measure were not made more Liberal. He defended the bill in an elaborate speech, advocating such an introduction of the working class to the franchise as would give them a considerable, but not a preponderating, power. A general election followed, and the Government gained several seats, but not sufficient to give it a majority. The different fractions of the Opposition drew together; on

June 11 a vote of want of confidence was carried by a majority of thirteen, and Lord Derby immediately resigned.

In opposition Lord Stanley devoted himself chiefly to the class of questions that had occupied him before his accession to office. He served on the long Cambridge University Commission, and supported the admission of Nonconformists to fellowships. He was also warmly in favour of the measure which made it possible for clergymen to free themselves from their orders, and to adopt other professions. He presided over the Commission on the Sanitary State of the Indian Army, and over the Commission on Patents. Like Disraeli, he displayed, during the American Civil War, a reticence and reserve which contrasted very favourably with the rash language of other leaders.

In 1862 a curious episode occurred, which showed, at least, the widespread reputation that he had acquired. Prince Alfred having refused the throne of Greece, the idea was for a short time entertained of offering it to Lord Stanley. 'If he accepts,' Disraeli wrote to his friend Mrs. Willyams, 'I shall lose a powerful friend and colleague. It is a dazzling adventure for the house of Stanley, but they are not an imaginative race, and I fancy they will prefer Knowsley to the Parthenon, and Lancashire to the Attic plains.' 'The Greeks really want to make my friend Lord Stanley their king. This beats any novel; but he will not. Had I his youth I would not hesitate, even with the earldom of Derby in the distance.'

It does not appear that this proposal ever took a very serious form, and if it had been made there is little doubt that Disraeli formed a just forecast of

what would have been the result. The death of Lord Palmerston on October 18, 1865, gave a new turn to the political kaleidoscope; Lord Russell became Prime Minister; the policy of reform was pushed into the forefront, and the Reform Bill of 1866 speedily produced a secession in the Liberal ranks, and led to the downfall of the Ministry. The feature of the bill which specially lent itself to attack was that it dealt solely with reduction of the franchise, leaving the question of the distribution of seats to subsequent legislation, and an amendment was moved by Lord Grosvenor to the effect that no bill for the reduction of the franchise should be discussed till the whole scheme was before the House. This amendment was seconded by Lord Stanley in a speech which Lord Malmesbury pronounced to be 'the finest and most statesmanlike speech he ever made.' In June the Government were beaten by a small majority on an amendment of Lord Dunkellin, substituting rating for rental; a few days later Lord Russell resigned, and Lord Derby for the third time became Prime Minister.

As on the two former occasions he was in a minority, though the temporary secession of a portion of the Liberal party gave him a precarious power. Once more, too, he took office amid the convulsions of a European war, for the war of Prussia and Italy with Austria had just begun. In the new ministry Lord Stanley was Secretary for Foreign Affairs. In his election address he gave the key-note of his policy by insisting in the strongest terms that England should observe a strict neutrality in European controversies. Her vast Indian and Colonial Empire, he said, made her a world apart, and threw upon her duties and responsibilities that taxed all her energies. She had duties,

also, to her poorer classes at home, whose condition was not what we could desire; and by simply existing as a free, prosperous, and self-governed nation, we should do more for the real freedom of Europe than by any policy of meddling or war.

As far as his own department was concerned, Lord Stanley's administration during this short ministry was both eminently consistent and eminently successful. It is true that this pacific minister made the Abyssinian war for the release of some imprisoned British subjects, but he only did this after every peaceful effort to procure their release had proved abortive, and it was almost universally recognised that there was no honourable alternative open to him. During his ministry the Luxemburg question brought France and Prussia to the very verge of war. It fell to the task of Lord Stanley to mediate between them, and he did so with a success which certainly adjourned, though it could not ultimately avert, the great catastrophe that burst upon Europe in 1870. No success could have been more gratifying to him, and he was fond of repeating the saying of Canning, that 'If a war must come sooner or later, for my part I prefer that it should come later than sooner.' Lord Russell bore an ungrudging testimony to the 'tact and discretion' Lord Stanley displayed in this negotiation. In the same spirit he refused to take part in a conference of European Powers, which the French Emperor desired to convene to settle the Roman question, declaring that this question was one with which England should in no way meddle, and that a conference would be useless and dangerous unless a basis were laid down before. He refused to interfere in any way with the Cretan rebellion, and with the

impending disputes between Turkey and Greece. His abstention on this question was blamed by some, but it met with the full approbation of his great opponent, Lord Russell, who declared that 'he had acted with much prudence and discretion.' He laid the foundation, also, of the settlement of the long outstanding difficulty with America by proposing to refer the Alabama question to arbitration, and he negotiated a treaty on the subject, which, however, the Senate refused to ratify.

In all this he was very consistent. The same consistency cannot be claimed for his support of a Reform Bill far more radical than that which his party had so recently rejected. In my own judgment it is impossible to defend with success the conduct of the Derby Ministry on this question, and although Lord Stanley took only a subsidiary part in it, he cannot escape his share of the responsibility. The difficulty of the position of the eldest son of the Prime Minister who was taking this 'leap in the dark' was very great, and it must be remembered that he had long been identified with the more democratic wing of his party. After the great agitation that followed the downfall of the Russell Ministry he probably regarded a democratic measure as inevitable, and it was the character of his mind to be very ready to accept what he considered the inevitable, and to endeavour by timely compromise to mitigate its effects. Lord Derby's health was now completely broken, and on February 24, 1868, he resigned office, and Disraeli became Prime Minister.

Mr. Gladstone soon re-united the sundered sections of the Opposition by raising the question of the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. The resolutions asserting the expediency of this policy were introduced

into the House of Commons in April. Lord Stanley was put forward as the principal opponent. His amendment expressed no opinion about the merits of the proposed policy, but simply affirmed that it was a question which ought to be reserved for a new Parliament which was soon to be elected under an altered franchise. In his speech he disclaimed any wish to maintain that the Irish Church Establishment was what it ought to be, but urged that in the condition of Ireland a merely destructive measure would do nothing but harm, that it would serve no good purpose to attack the Establishment without laying down the lines of a definite, constructive, ecclesiastical policy, and that it was absurd to launch such a question in the last session of an expiring Parliament. The more ardent spirits of the Tory party strongly censured the ambiguity of this defence, and the Government were beaten by majorities of sixty and fifty-six. The House of Commons was dissolved in the autumn, and a large Liberal majority returned. Disraeli at once resigned without waiting for the assembling of Parliament.

In October 1869 the death of Lord Derby terminated the career of his son in the House of Commons, and the following year added very greatly to the happiness of his life by his marriage with the Dowager Marchioness of Salisbury. His attitude in opposition is clearly shown in the speeches in the present volumes. He had no wish to see the Conservative party again in office till they possessed an assured and homogeneous majority, and he maintained that it should be their main object to strengthen the influence of the more moderate section in the Government. He believed that by habitually pursuing this policy they would best prevent

revolutionary changes, mitigate by wise compromises measures which they did not wholly approve, secure the continuance of the harmony of classes, on which more than on any other condition the prosperity of England depends, and gradually strengthen their own hold on the confidence of the country. It was also his earnest desire that English politics should be turned as much as possible from a policy of organic change to a policy of administrative reform. He considered it a great evil that public men had acquired the habit of continually tampering with the existing legislative machinery instead of wisely using it for the benefit of the whole nation. The party system, as he always thought, had falsified the perspective of English politics, bringing into the foreground comparatively unimportant questions which were well suited to rally parties and win majorities; thrusting into the background others which were immeasurably more important, but which were less available for party purposes. What Carlyle called 'The Condition of England Question' was always in his thoughts. No one would accuse him of underrating the evils of war, but he questioned whether the most sanguinary battle which had ever been fought carried off nearly as many human beings as die in England every year from purely preventible causes. He threw the whole force of his clear and penetrating intellect into such questions as sanitary reform, the regulation of mines, the promotion of education, and especially technical education, the organisation of charities, the treatment of juvenile offenders, the diffusion of wise methods of encouraging saving among the poor. The overcrowding of the great cities and the vast masses of insanitary dwellings seemed to him one

of the most pressing dangers of the time, and he was a prominent member of nearly every important company and association in England for improving the houses of artisans. He had no puritanism in his nature, and was very anxious, by the establishment of free libraries, and people's parks, and Sunday opening of museums, to extend the range of innocent pleasure. 'Men die,' he once said, 'for want of cheerfulness, as plants die for want of light.' He did not believe in the repression of drunkenness by coercive legislation like the Local Veto Bill, but he believed that its true root lay in over-crowding, ignorance, insanitary conditions of life, the want of innocent means of enjoyment, excessive hours of labour. 'When you have to deal with men in masses,' he said, 'the connection between vice and disease is very close. With a low average of popular health you will have a low average of national morality, and probably also of national intellect. Drunkenness and vice of other kinds will flourish on such a soil, and you cannot get healthy brains to grow on unhealthy bodies. Cleanliness and self-respect grow together, and it is no paradox to affirm that you tend to purify men's thoughts and feelings when you purify the air they breathe.' He supported liberally the movement for establishing coffee houses, and he looked with great hope to the co-operative movement as averting or mitigating industrial conflicts. 'The subject of co-operation,' he said, 'is in my judgment more important as regards the future of England than nine-tenths of those which are discussed in Parliament, and around which political controversies gather.' As the possessor of one of the largest properties in England he was excellently informed on all agricultural questions, and he exercised a great

influence upon them. Among other services he dispelled many misrepresentations by obtaining an accurate return of the number of owners of land in the United Kingdom, and of the quantity of land which they owned.

With the single exception of Lord Shaftesbury, I believe no conspicuous English public man devoted so much time and labour as Lord Derby to the class of questions I have described. He brought to their discussion an almost unrivalled fullness of knowledge. His purse was liberally opened in such causes, and the speeches in which he examined what Government can do and what it can not do for the material well-being of the poor are in my judgment among the most valuable contributions to political thought that have been furnished by any English statesman during the present century.

The election of 1874 bringing the Conservative party again into power called him to other fields, and he became for the second time Foreign Secretary under Disraeli, and was soon involved in that Eastern Question which led to his severance from the Conservative party. It would answer no good purpose in a short sketch like the present to rake up the still smouldering ashes of that controversy. The time will come when it will be reviewed in the calm light of history, and with the assistance of materials that are not now before the public. I shall here content myself with a mere sketch. In the earlier stages of their foreign policy the Government appear to have been perfectly agreed. Lord Derby fully concurred in the purchase of the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal, which was one of the most successful strokes of policy

of the Government, though he defended it on somewhat more prosaic grounds than some of its supporters, and was careful to explain that it was essentially a measure of self-defence, and not connected with any project for the dismemberment of Turkey or the establishment of an English protectorate in Egypt. When the insurrection broke out in 1875 in Herzegovina and Bosnia neither Lord Derby nor any of his colleagues believed it to be more than a mere passing disturbance. But the feebleness manifested by the Turkish army in suppressing the insurrection, and the partial bankruptcy of the Government at Constantinople, contributed with many elements of race and religious dissension, with foreign intrigue and local misgovernment, to aggravate the sore, and the movement soon acquired the dimensions of a great European danger. In sending an English Consul in conjunction with the Consuls of the other Powers to the scene of insurrection, in order, if possible, to arrive at a mediation; in the acceptance of the Andrassy note, by which the three Imperial Powers laid down the reforms which they considered urgently necessary; in the rejection of the Berlin Memorandum, on the ground that the Porte could not or would not carry out its demands, and that it would almost certainly lead to an armed intervention; and, finally, in sending the British fleet to Besika Bay for the purpose of protecting English and Christian interests at Constantinople, at a time when that city was in a state of almost complete anarchy, the Government were fully agreed, and they carried with them an immense majority in Parliament and in the country. For some time, also, the country seemed to approve of the policy which Lord Derby uniformly avowed and steadily observed, of

maintaining a strict neutrality in the contest that was raging; doing all that could be done by advice, remonstrance, mediation and moral influence, to induce the Porte to carry out internal reforms; warning the Turkish Government in clear terms that under the circumstances of the case it must not look for any military assistance from England; but at the same time discouraging as much as possible the active interference of other Powers in the affairs of Turkey, and abstaining rigidly from any step that would involve the use of force or the chance of war unless some serious English interest was affected. He believed that the integrity of the Turkish Empire was a vital English interest, and that any attempt to substitute a Slavonic for a Turkish Empire would bring upon Europe calamities the extent of which it was impossible to exaggerate or to foresee. Russia and Austria would at once come into collision; England would almost certainly be drawn into the war, and all the fierce elements of race hatred and religious fanaticism would be let loose.

For a time most English politicians seem to have agreed with him, and his one great object was to bring about an armistice, a mediation, and a peace. But the popular agitation which arose in England on the subject of the Bulgarian atrocities, in the summer and autumn of 1876, added enormously to his difficulties, and the danger was the greater because some skilful party management was blended with much genuine philanthropy. The speeches given in these volumes addressed by Lord Derby to the successive deputations that came to him give the best explanation and defence of his position during this critical period, and the interruptions to which he had to reply give a vivid picture

of the state of feeling that had arisen. The Crimean War was now deplored as a calamity, if not a crime. The Turks were described on high political authority as 'the one great anti-human specimen of humanity.' The Ministers were accused of complicity in the Bulgarian massacres; they were urged to cast neutrality to the wind; to adopt a policy of armed coercion in Turkey; even to assist Russia in driving the Turks out of Constantinople. It had become, as Lord Derby sarcastically said, a very unpopular thing for an English Minister to talk of English interests in connection with the Eastern Question—almost dangerous for any man at a public meeting to express in plain terms his doubt of the disinterested philanthropy of Russia.

Lord Derby had at this time to encounter much unpopularity. He was accused of an undue leaning towards the Turkish Government, and an inadequate sympathy with the Christian populations; and it was alleged that, if he had acted in firm concert with the other Powers in coercing the Porte—if he had not proclaimed so loudly and constantly his determination to abstain from all active interference and compulsion—his remonstrances would have had more effect, and he might have averted or restricted the calamities that had occurred. But a great change soon took place. The first object of the Government was to prevent the Turkish disturbance from leading to a European war, and in this object it failed. On April 24, 1877, Russia, in spite of English remonstrances, declared war against Turkey. On the same day a Russian army crossed the Pruth, and the Eastern Question entered into a new and dangerous phase.

To a statesman like Lord Derby, who maintained

that war, unless it is a necessity, is a crime, and that the maintenance of peace is beyond all comparison the greatest of British interests, the months that followed were extremely trying. His first object was to limit the war and to safeguard English interests, and for this purpose he drew up, on May 6, 1877, a note defining the English interests that were vital in the East. He warned the Russian Government that an attempt by Russia to blockade the Suez Canal, an attack on Egypt, a Russian occupation of Constantinople, or an alteration of the existing arrangements for the navigation of the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles might compel England to abandon her neutrality. Russia accepted these conditions, and for some time there appeared every prospect of limiting the war. But in the beginning of 1878 a period of extreme danger undoubtedly arrived. Plevna had fallen. The Turkish resistance had collapsed. A Russian army, flushed with victory, had advanced to near Constantinople. The treaty of San Stephano was signed, which, in the opinion of most European statesmen, placed Turkey at the feet of Russia, and Russia at first refused to submit its terms to a conference of European Powers. Public feeling in England now ran strongly in a direction almost opposite to that in which it had been running eighteen months before, and the nation was extremely alarmed at the danger of Constantinople becoming speedily and irremediably a Russian port. On the other hand, the national and military pride of the conquering power was aroused, and it was felt that a single false step, a single imprudent menace, might lead to war.

It was one of those moments in which men's judgments are largely affected by their temperaments, and it

soon became evident that the Cabinet was seriously divided. Disraeli had now become Lord Beaconsfield, and sat with his Foreign Secretary in the House of Lords. With his character it was inevitable that he should meet the danger by a bold, decisive, and even aggressive policy. It was no less natural that Lord Derby should have persistently leaned towards the side of caution, and shrunk from any measure that could cut short negotiation, and diminish the chances of peace. The order given that the British fleet should enter the Dardanelles first produced the inevitable schism, and Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon resigned. The order was countermanded, and Lord Derby, for a short time, resumed his post. He acquiesced, but with great reluctance, in the vote of credit for six millions, which was at once brought before the House of Commons, but he was soon convinced that measures he did not approve of were impending, and when orders were given for calling out the reserves he definitely resigned.

He announced his resignation on March 28, 1878, in terms of much dignity and moderation. He believed, he said, that his colleagues desired peace as truly as himself, and he did not maintain that their later measures led inevitably to war, but he considered that they were neither necessary nor 'prudent in the interests of European peace.' He agreed that the terms of the treaty should be submitted to a European Congress, in which England should take part. On minor matters he thought it his duty to waive his own opinion, but he could not do so on a question involving the momentous issue of peace or war. The threat involved in the last act of the Government, he said, in a later speech, would make it more difficult for Russia to modify her policy,

and he believed that without a threat such a modification of the treaty of San Stephano could be obtained as would make it acceptable. He had been accused of indecision and even of cowardice. For his own part he thought it needed more courage to stand up in his place to express views which he knew to be unpopular among the great body of his friends, than to sit at a desk in Downing Street and issue orders which would bring no danger or unpopularity to himself, but might bring about a European war.

The short speech in which Lord Beaconsfield accepted the resignation, and dwelt on the long friendship, personal as well as political, that bound him to Lord Derby, seems to me a perfect model of good feeling and good taste. Unfortunately the example of the Prime Minister was not followed by all his colleagues, and words used in a later debate went far to make the breach irrevocable.

Lord Derby for a short time maintained a neutral position, but the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield was in the highest degree distasteful to him. A wave of Chauvinism was passing over England, which was utterly opposed to his views, and he believed that a section of the Conservative party encouraged it in order to divert the thoughts of men from internal reforms. He objected to the acquisition of Cyprus, to some of the responsibilities assumed by England under the treaty of Berlin, and very strongly to the Afghan War; and in the beginning of 1880 he formally attached himself to the Liberal party, on the ground of his objections to the foreign policy of the Government. His speeches in his new capacity differed very little from those which he had formerly delivered, but he said that

he had learnt to see more clearly the uselessness of attempting to resist popular ideas, and to think 'more highly of the moderation, the fairness, and the general justice with which masses of men, including all conditions of life, are disposed to use their power.' He thought that England should mix herself as little as possible with 'the sanguinary muddle' of European diplomacy; that she should avoid increasing her responsibilities; that she should take stringent measures to reduce her debt; that she should pay much more attention than she was accustomed to do to the condition of her own poorer population; and that it should be the object of her statesmen to meet every great popular demand by wise and equitable compromise. One of the greatest dangers, he said, that could befall the country would be 'a state of things in which the comparatively harmless antagonism of parties would be replaced by the far more serious and dangerous war of classes. From that danger more than from any other it is the business of a well-considered Liberalism to protect us.'

In 1882 he accepted the Colonial Office from Mr. Gladstone, and held it until the fall of the Government in the summer of 1885. His ministry was not a very eventful one, and it was marked by that steady adherence to a middle line which had always characterised him. He congratulated the country that the indifference to our Colonies which had prevailed during his youth had passed away, but he was by no means favourable to extensions of the Empire. 'We have quite black men enough,' he was accustomed to say; and he believed that any increase of our responsibilities was likely to endanger the Empire, and to divert

the energies of politicians from pressing home questions. He was very sceptical about Imperial Federation. He did much to appease the troubles in Africa. He showed himself quite ready to favour Confederation in Australia, and he accepted gratefully Australian help in the Soudan, but he was much alarmed by tendencies in some Colonies which might lead to complications with foreign Powers, and he incurred considerable unpopularity in Australia by refusing to consent to the annexation by Queensland of New Guinea.

The sudden conversion of Mr. Gladstone to Home Rule produced one more change in the attitude of Lord Derby. On this question he never flinched or wavered, and he at once took his place in the front rank of the Liberal Unionists, whom for some time he led in the House of Lords. I do not know that the Unionist case has ever been more powerfully put forward than in his speeches on the subject, and the eminently judicial character of his mind, and his entire freedom from all mere party bias, gave a special weight to his advocacy. With this exception he was seldom prominent in party politics during the last years of his life, but he devoted himself largely to social questions, and among other things served with great assiduity and ability on the Labour Commission. His last speech was delivered at Manchester on the unveiling of the statue of Mr. Bright in October 1891. His last public work was that of presiding over the Labour Commission in May 1892. In the preceding year an attack of influenza, followed by a relapse, had shattered a health which had hitherto been robust. Other complications ensued, and he passed away at Knowsley on April 21, 1893, in his sixty-seventh year.

The foregoing sketch will, I hope, have given a sufficient idea of his public character. Few men have made a greater sacrifice of ambition to a conscientious conviction than he did, when, rather than support a measure which might lead to war, he abandoned the Conservative Ministry in 1878. He was then the fully recognised successor of Lord Beaconsfield, and if he had adopted a different course he would in a short time have been, beyond all doubt, Prime Minister of England. On the whole, however, the severance from old friends cost him, I believe, far more than the sacrifice of his political prospects. Whatever he may have been in his youth, he was certainly not in mature life an ambitious man. With the great position he held in England the world had little to offer him, and the self-knowledge which was not the least of his many remarkable gifts showed him that party conflict was not the sphere in which nature intended him to move. With many of the qualities of the highest statesmanship he wanted some necessary ingredients of a great statesman. He wanted the power of appealing to the imagination and moving the passions. He wanted more decision of character, more power of initiative, more capacity of bearing lightly the weight of a great responsibility. His belief that the House of Lords must always ultimately yield to the House of Commons aggravated a weakness of resolution which was deeply rooted in his nature. There were moments when his inveterate moderation tended to exasperate, and he was accused, not altogether without reason, of sometimes making admirable speeches, pointing out in the clearest terms all the evils and dangers of a measure, and then concluding by exhorting the House of Lords to vote for it,

introducing mitigating amendments in committee. The measures he treated in this way usually, as he had predicted, became law, but this was not the attitude of a great leader. During a considerable part of his career, like a very large proportion of moderate men in England, he was in the embarrassing position of agreeing substantially with the home policy of one party and with the foreign policy of the other. After the death of Lord Palmerston an element of passion was infused into public life which was very uncongenial to his temperament, and English politics passed into phases in which caution, character, judgment, and knowledge were less prized than brilliant strokes that appealed to the popular imagination, clever coalitions, a skilful barter of principles for votes. In spheres governed by such methods Lord Derby was very useful, but he was not likely to play a foremost part.

To few men who have taken a conspicuous part in active politics was the excitement of such an existence so little necessary. Happy in his domestic life and in a companionship and sympathy which were all-sufficient to him, he was not less happy in the wide range of his interests and duties. The administration of his vast estate would have been more than sufficient to tax the energies of most men, and it was, I believe, universally acknowledged that it was admirably administered. In the every-day affairs of practical life he had no indecision, and he judged swiftly with the clearest of judgments. Nothing about him was more remarkable than the apparent ease and the absence of all hurry and confusion with which he could deal with many different forms of work. His study in its perfect neatness was more like a lady's boudoir than the workshop of a very

busy man. *Ohne Hast, ohne Rast*, might have been his motto. He had much belief in the future of English land, and was not, I think, at all exempt from the great English landlord's foible of adding field to field. In the long period of agricultural depression it was easy for a rich man to do so. 'In my experience,' he used to say, 'in nine cases out of ten it is Naboth who comes to Ahab and begs him to buy his vineyard.' Certainly no one had reason to complain, for there were few better or more popular landlords than Lord Derby.

In many long walks with him through his property I was always struck with the evident pleasure with which he was welcomed by his people, the fulness of knowledge and the kindness of interest with which he inquired into the circumstances of every tenant. It is characteristic of him that only two days before his death he was giving instructions for building a hospital for the sick poor of Knowsley. I have known few men in whom the desire to make every one about them happy was so strongly and so clearly marked. He was fond of looking minutely into the circumstances of men of different classes, and comparing their wants with their means, often with somewhat whimsical results. There was a tradesman who made regularly 5*l.* a week, who was accustomed every week to devote 2*l.* to his household expenses, to lay by 2*l.*, and to employ the remainder in getting drunk. He was, Lord Derby thought, the only man he had ever known who satisfied all his wants with 40 per cent. of his income, who always laid by 40 per cent., and who expended 20 per cent. on his pleasures.

Outside his property Lord Derby had strong county interests. With perhaps the exception of Birmingham,

there is no part of England where a distinctive local patriotism is so intensely developed as in Lancashire, and Lord Derby, in tastes and character, was pre-eminently a Lancashire man, very proud of the greatness, and deeply concerned in the interests of his county. In all the vicissitudes of his career, Liverpool, I believe, never wavered in its attachment to him. He contributed to the many charitable and philanthropic works with which he was concerned, not only much money, but also—what in so rich a man was far more meritorious—an extraordinary amount of time and patient supervision. Among the many offices he accepted was that of President of the Royal Literary Fund for dispensing charity to needy authors, and on the committee of that charity I had, during many years, ample opportunity of observing how far he was from treating a presidential position as a sinecure. The regularity of his attendance, the constant attention he paid to every detail of the charity, the infinite pains which he would bestow upon obscure cases of distress, marked him out as a model president, and many of those whom our rules did not allow us to help were assisted by his bounty. He contributed with a large but discriminating generosity to many causes that were conspicuous in the eyes of the world, but his special bias was towards unostentatious and unobserved benevolence, and crowds of obscure men in obscure positions were assisted by him.

Those who did not know him, and those who had come in merely casual contact with him, sometimes formed a very false impression of his character. He had a great deal of natural shyness. He had very little of the gift of small talk. On occasions of mere show

and in uncongenial atmospheres he was apt to be awkward and embarrassed, and when walking by himself he was extremely absent and quite capable of brushing against his oldest friend with a complete unconsciousness of his presence. These traits sometimes gave rise to natural misinterpretations, which a fuller knowledge always dispelled. No one who knew Lord Derby could fail to feel that his nature was one of the most genuine and transparent simplicity, singularly free from all tinge of arrogance, superciliousness, and acrimony. His personal tastes were exceedingly simple, and there was not a particle of ostentation in his character. He delighted in a quiet country life, and had a strong sense of natural beauty. In his youth he had been an ardent mountaineer, and in later life he had few greater pleasures than to watch the growth of his plantations. He calculated that he had planted in his lifetime about two millions of trees. He was among the best-read men I have ever known. His private library was one of the finest in England, and he took a keen interest in it. A love of sumptuous large-paper editions was indeed one of the very few luxuries, in which from mere personal taste he greatly indulged. Like all men of literary tastes, he had his limitations. German was a closed book to him. Theology and metaphysics were conspicuous by their absence. He was certainly not drawn to the mystical, the unintelligible, or the morbid, either in imaginative or speculative literature, and, although he was a great lover and great buyer of water-colour pictures, I do not think he had much real sense or knowledge of art. But he had read very extensively, and with great profit and discrimination, in many widely different fields, and his

memory was unusually retentive. He was an excellent literary critic, and if clear thought and accurate knowledge were what he most valued, it would be a complete mistake to suppose that he was insensible to the poetic and imaginative side of literature. He could repeat long passages from 'Childe Harold,' and I can well remember the delight which he took in the picturesque narrative of Mr. Froude, and in the fiery verses of Sir Alfred Lyall.

He was one of the kindest and most gracious of hosts, and his genuine, unforced good nature and good humour drew to him many whose tastes and sympathies were widely different from his own. Nature certainly never intended him for a sportsman, but he preserved game extensively, and until the last years of his life usually went out with his guests. 'I rather like shooting,' he once said to me; 'it prevents the necessity of general conversation.' Among kindred spirits, however, his own conversation was eminently attractive. His wide knowledge both of books and men, his vast range of political anecdote, his experience of so many statesmen, and offices, and departments of life made it singularly instructive. He was a very shrewd and at the same time a very kind judge of character, and he had a power, which is certainly not common, of fully appreciating merits that are allied with great and manifest defects. He had much quaint, dry humour, and a great happiness of expression, and one always felt that his opinions were genuinely thought out—that they were voices, and not echoes. His private conversation had the quality that I have noticed in his public speeches, of grasping at once the essential elements of a question, and disencumbering it from accessories and

details. It is one of the qualities that add most to the charm of conversation, and, with the exception of Lord Russell, I do not think I have met with any one who possessed it to a greater degree than Lord Derby. He delighted in long walks with one or two friends, and he might be seen to great advantage in some small dining clubs which play a larger part than is generally recognised in the best English social life of our time. He had been a member of Grillion's for thirty-seven years, but the society to which he was most attached was, I think, the club which was founded by Johnson and Reynolds. During the nineteen years of which I can speak from personal experience, he was an almost constant attendant, and certainly no other member enjoyed a greater popularity in it, or contributed more largely to its charm.

He hated cant of all kinds, and had a great distrust of ostentatious professions of lofty motives. He disliked, I think greatly, the habit of dragging sacred names into party speeches, and attributing every party manœuvre to a solemn sense of duty. Language of this kind will never be found in his speeches; but I have known few men who were governed through life more steadily though more unobtrusively by a sense of duty. He always tried to look facts in the face, and to promote in the many spheres which he could influence the real happiness of men. There have been statesmen among his contemporaries of greater power and of more brilliant achievement. There has been, I believe, no statesman of sounder judgment and more disinterested patriotism; there have been very few whose departure has left a void in so many spheres.

W. E. H. Lecky.

I

ON READING—ADVANTAGES OF STUDY TO THE MECHANIC

LYNN: AUGUST 1854

I THANK you most sincerely for the address to which we have just listened; and I accept it, as you desire me to do—not as an unmeaning compliment, not as a mere phrase of conventional courtesy, far less as an expression of political opinion, but—as a genuine mark, on your part, of personal sympathy, and, what is even more important, as evidence that you are willing to co-operate heartily and practically with me in that design in which you and I are alike engaged. It is a design in which a few persons—still more single individuals—however well-intentioned, can do little or nothing. It is a design in which money alone can do nothing. It is easy enough to buy books, but readers must come of their own free will; and books without readers, I need not say, are the most useless of all possible things.

It is not necessary, after the statement which you have heard, and after what has transpired in another manner, to state in any detail the arrangements which we propose for the intended library. . . . I do not expect—and I am glad to find that that is the case with those who addressed me—I do not expect too much from this undertaking. There are exceptions, and brilliant ones—but as a general rule it is impossible that those the greater part of whose time is taken up by the daily occupations in which they are engaged should study to the same extent, or with the same result, as those who come to the work of study with all their time at their disposal and with all their energies unexhausted. Still, even

in that respect, as I have said, many exceptions are to be found; many of the most eminent men in the various learned professions, in science, in law perhaps especially—in literature also—have risen from the least wealthy class. I say risen, because that is the usual phrase applied in such cases. But after all we must all feel—I am sure I do—that a man's social position in the world is comparatively a very small part of his existence.

Next to that which is the highest of all pleasures, and is perhaps the rarest—next to the conviction, the consciousness that you are capable of doing, and that you are doing, service to mankind—I say next to that, probably the highest, or at all events the most permanent enjoyment, is that which arises from intellectual as well as bodily health. I mean this—that the result of education, the result of learning, is not to be measured by the amount of display which it produces before the world at large, but by the result which it produces as regards the individual himself. Now, of all men, perhaps those who are most likely to enjoy bodily health are those whose employments are constant, regular, and moderately laborious; and as to intellectual discipline and training, I say only what has been said often before—and said, I believe, with truth—that those who have habits of industry and application may, however limited the time at their disposal for study, accomplish in that comparatively limited time, not only as much as, but more than, those who, with a greater amount of disposable leisure, have not been compelled by the circumstances of their position to acquire the same habits of energetic and regular labour. I do not hesitate to say that if a man, engaged it may be in some absorbing occupation during the greater part of the day, can reserve a certain period, even though a short period, regularly and habitually, for reading, he may in a comparatively short time accomplish much more than will be done by the desultory and comparatively less energetic efforts of those who, with perhaps less desire to learn, have infinitely greater opportunities.

There are some points, I think, in which, as regards the

social position of the working-classes, we are fairly entitled to look to the future with hope. One point especially I would refer to—I mean the degree to which labour, bodily labour and mechanical labour, is now lessened, and will be lessened, to a great extent in this country, and perhaps more so in the United States, by the application of mechanical improvements. Of course the first effect of the introduction of such improvements is rather to produce disturbance amongst the industrial classes. They throw men out of work, they disarrange established occupations, and the first feeling therefore with which they are received is generally not one of satisfaction. But it is quite obvious what is the ultimate and permanent result; that in the long run, if the same amount of labour can be accomplished with less human exertion, if the same amount of food or of necessaries can be produced by a fewer number of persons, all mankind are the gainers; the time that is absorbed in these mechanical employments is diminished, and proportionally a longer period is allowed for employments of a higher character. If we compare the state of things in this respect at the present day with what it was a hundred years ago, I do not think it is anything wild or foolish or visionary to say that it is not impossible that fifty or a hundred years hence the average amount of work which each man will have to get through in order to provide for himself the necessaries of life will be very considerably smaller than it now is, and will, in fact, amount to comparatively a small proportion of his whole time. When, if ever it so happens, that period arrives, then universal education, universal knowledge will be not a thing to talk of, but a reality practically worked out. Until then, of course, the result can only be partial; until then there will always be much ignorance, and a very imperfect degree of education.

The knowledge attained in the present state of society by the great majority of men will be of very inferior amount. But even in this respect I think we need not despair, because so far as the most important point of all, the effect upon a man's own mind, is concerned, the mere amount of knowledge,

the mere amount of reading, which he acquires is comparatively an unimportant thing. Reading is one thing—thought another; and it is not so much the object to have a mind filled with facts, as to have it well disciplined. The question which we shall all be asked, and the question which we must ask ourselves, is not so much 'What have we learnt?' as 'What can we do?' Now the practical power and practical ability depends, I repeat it, not upon the amount of knowledge acquired so much as upon the perfection and accuracy with which that knowledge is gained. You no more, to use a familiar simile, measure a man's ability by the number of books he has read than you measure his strength by the number of dinners he has eaten. The object of reading is to give practically applicable knowledge, and the object of food is to give bodily strength; and in each case you judge not by the means employed, but by the result obtained.

I believe it to be very possible—and all experience bears me out—that in a comparatively small amount of time by careful, by continuous nd regular study, even though that study be of a very few works, a greater degree of mental discipline may be obtained than is obtained by irregular and desultory reading extending over a much longer period. That is of course an important feature of the case as regards those the greater part of whose time is employed; and though this is a question to which we should at any time look with deep interest, it is a question to which I think we look with deeper interest now than at any former period of time. I do not say that without a reason. We all feel, we all know, and we all experience it, that in our present state of high and artificial civilisation there are many almost incalculably great benefits. We know, also, that those who have benefited to the greatest degree by that state of civilisation are in general the least wealthy class. But of that state of society which has arisen, say within the last hundred years, if it has great and paramount advantages, those advantages are not, on the other hand, unaccompanied with evils.

As States grow more highly civilised, one necessary result,

which we all have seen, is the greater division of labour which is indispensable to high commercial and mechanical processes. You always see that, as the productive power of a country increases, and as every mechanical art advances to perfection, one means by which that perfection is obtained is the great subdivision of labour, which gives every man only one single employment, perhaps only a small part of one employment, to pursue. That is an advantage mechanically and commercially as regards society. It is not, however, an advantage as regards the individual. I do not, perhaps, speak so much with reference to this part of the country as with reference to my own part of the country—the manufacturing districts. But the defect of our social arrangements, say in a manufacturing district, is this, that instead of every man having, as in an earlier state of society, to provide for himself nearly everything that he requires, and so follow a great variety of occupations, he is reduced to the continual repetition of one single occupation; he becomes, in fact, a living machine; or rather he becomes only a part of a machine. That is what we all see, and what forces itself irresistibly on our notice. In that way, I think, working men lose a great deal of that kind of practical training which in an earlier and more primitive state of society they would get.

Take, for example, a man in the backwoods or in Australia, he is compelled by the very necessity of the case to take up half a dozen trades, to follow half a dozen pursuits, and supply himself with almost everything he wants. This man, if you put him in almost any part of the world, will be able to shift for himself. On the other hand, if you take a man—I do not care whether he be a mechanical or agricultural labourer—who has been employed all his life in doing one particular thing, and if you remove him from the country in which he has hitherto lived, he is perfectly helpless; he is in a new world; he has no experience to guide him. That I name because I think it is an evil and a disadvantage inevitably incident to our present state of society, but one which furnishes us with an additional inducement

to counteract it by all intellectual means in our power. The more mechanical a man's work becomes, the more important it is that in that part of his life which is not given to his work he should cultivate a wide and general knowledge of things. It is only in this way (and I do not say it is a perfect remedy) that you can in some degree supply the want of practical training which arises out of the artificial arrangement of society.

There is also another consideration—that whereas a man who is engaged in a great variety of pursuits has something in the daily routine of his work to interest and to excite him, the more mechanical work becomes—the more it is divided—the more a man is confined to doing one thing, the more utterly uninteresting that work becomes, the less exercise for the intellect it affords, the less pleasure he can take in it, and consequently the greater becomes the necessity of obtaining occupation and intellectual food in some other manner.

Gentlemen, I think I have nearly said what I was anxious to say. I believe that in the present age such means of instruction as we desire to provide are more necessary than they have been in any former time. I think that the class who stand most in need of them (and that indeed requires no proof) are the working class. And of this I am quite sure, that nothing can be done permanently for any class of men which is not in part done by them; that without not only their sympathy, not only their thanks, not only their good wishes, but without their real and practical co-operation, we cannot hope for real success.

II

THE NEEDS OF GREAT TOWNS—MECHANICS' INSTITUTIONS—CAREERS OPEN TO ABILITY

BOLTON: OCTOBER 1855

I ASSURE you that it is with a feeling of singular, and more than usual, interest that I find myself now, for the first time, present and taking a public part in the affairs of a town whose name is connected with that which I bear by an historical reminiscence at once melancholy and ennobling. And I confess that I cannot accept unmoved the welcome offered me by so many inhabitants of this great manufacturing borough—one which, from the days when the emigrant Flemings settled here, five hundred years ago, bringing with them the industrial skill and enterprise which they were not permitted to display unmolested at home, down to that time, almost within the memory of some now living, when Arkwright and Crompton here worked out those important mechanical discoveries which, directly or indirectly, have made every one in this room richer than they would have been without them—this borough, I say, which from ancient to the present time has not only held its ground and maintained its position against a local competition as severe as that to which any community was ever exposed, but has progressed with a rapidity which is beyond the usual rate of progress, even in this county of Lancashire.

And passing on from what is merely personal, either to you or to myself, I will say that in these Lancashire towns—in these great industrial communities throughout that entire district which acknowledges Manchester as its centre—which may be almost regarded as one continuous town, and which,

so regarded, exceeds in population and productive power London itself—there exists a more vigorous vitality and a more morally healthy life than among any other portion, be it what it may, of English society. Life is more earnest—industry more intense—thought more free: mere externals and conventionalities occupy a smaller share of men's time and thoughts. It is not amongst you an honour and a distinction to be idle; you not only admit, but practically act upon and enforce, the truth that, whoever—not being mentally or physically disqualified—lives disengaged from any active pursuit, is thereby wronging his own nature—leaving undeveloped the best of its faculties, and failing to fulfil those obligations which we all owe to the society of which we are members.

Whatever faults there are in the social system of these districts—and I am not here merely to flatter or compliment any man or any class at the expense of others—are due in great part to the very energy and activity which have made Lancashire what it is, and to the extreme rapidity with which material and commercial progress has advanced. I will say frankly—for you love plain dealing, and can afford to hear the truth spoken—what it is that I mean. I mean that notwithstanding great and laudable efforts on the part of individuals, aided by the sympathy and approval of all, not quite enough has yet been done in Lancashire—I say yet, and I lay emphasis on the word, for much is doing now—for the common social benefit of all classes, and particularly for that of the less wealthy class.

There are some institutions—there are some public works, which no well-ordered town of any magnitude ought to be without, but which there has scarcely been leisure fully to attend to in these localities, where that which fifty years ago was a village is now a city. In the first place, no town should be without accommodation, in some place of worship, for as many of its inhabitants as can reasonably be expected to attend. That is obvious, and I pass it by the more readily as, in that respect, judging from a hasty survey, Bolton

appears to be amply provided. Again, there ought to be room in your schools for every child between the ages of five and fifteen; and not only room, but some effort made—I dare say it is made—by organisation among the wealthy, to get the children sent; and, still more, there should be a constant local vigilance and superintendence to see that the teaching is good in quality as well as sufficient in quantity. Here, again, there can be no ground of dispute, and I only indicate in passing that upon which it would be superfluous to dwell. Thirdly—and to this I beg to call attention—it is wrong that thirty thousand—fifty thousand—or sixty thousand, as here—even in some places one hundred thousand human beings, should be cooped up in one spot without something in the nature of a park or public gardens, in which children and boys may have their outdoor amusements, and grown men and women take exercise and breathe the air of heaven as little obscured by smoke as may be. In this particular Manchester has set a good example; Liverpool, I am told, means to do the same; and Preston has made up its mind not to be left far behind. Fourthly, you require a free public rate-supported library, in a central position, with means of distributing and circulating its books within convenient distances, and on a scale commensurate with the wants of the town in which it is set up. In this respect—as I dare say in others, for I wish it to be understood that these remarks are merely general—there is no deficiency here. And it is within my personal knowledge that the energy and public spirit displayed in Bolton have operated, and are now operating, on at least two of the other neighbouring towns. Fifth in the list of requirements I place public baths and washhouses. On these I do not dilate, for they have been pretty generally established, and it would be an insult to an intelligent audience to expatiate upon the benefits of soap and water. You have them in this town, and I can only express a hope that the attempt may be as successful as it deserves to be. Sixthly, you require places of amusement—of recreation and refreshment—for working men. I am not now speaking

of instruction—that is a separate matter—but I mean places such as news-rooms and refreshment-rooms combined in one, with a few books accessible—a kind of poor man's club, where he may find all the comforts of a public-house without its attendant evils—and where he may neither be exposed to temptation on the one hand, nor on the other feel himself under any such constraint as is imposed by the presence of persons whose habits of life are different. Such places of entertainment have been and are being established in various parts of the country, both urban and rural; and where they exist, and where the management has been judicious, I believe no more effectual rival to the public-house can be set up, and no heavier blow inflicted upon that which I am afraid is our national vice—intemperance. Lastly, and you will be glad to hear I have arrived at the end of this long catalogue of *desiderata*, I would tell you emphatically that no urban community can be complete—can be furnished with all these appliances of civilisation which the habits of the times and country require—which does not contain some institution for the promotion of adult learning like that whose second foundation we celebrate this evening.

If in every Lancashire town—for speaking here I address others besides the immediate inhabitants of Bolton—these various wants were supplied—if the same spirit were everywhere exhibited which has dictated these vast and costly improvements on which the authorities of this town are even now engaged, we should not see, as in some parts of this county we are too apt to do now, side by side with the most wonderful results of inventive talent and the most assiduous display of industry, signs of neglect in many common matters affecting domestic comfort. Streets crowded every evening with operatives, who lounge there literally because they have no other place to resort to, except the public-house or the comfortless lodging—dirty, untaught children swarming about the puddles and gutters—smoke in the air above—mud on the ground below—and a gin-shop or beer-shop at every corner. Now I know there are circumstances in our mode of

life in this part of England which have a peculiar tendency to destroy or weaken—at least among one class—all local attachments. I allude especially to that continual movement of the population—that influx and efflux which is constantly taking place, dependent upon commercial success or failure—the extent of which is hardly known or regarded. For instance, I look for Bolton in the census of 1851, and find that, of 61,000 inhabitants there set down, only 36,000 were returned as born in the town itself; 16,000 more as born within the limits of the county, but not in the town; while 9,000 were strangers altogether. That is a state of things not favourable to local patriotism. But, be it so or otherwise, the capitalists of this town, and of others similarly situated, know both their duty and their interest far too well to ignore that moral tie—that tie of common interest and common prosperity, which inevitably results from, and is inseparably connected with, the bond of pecuniary connection.

We live in a new age; the conditions of society are changed; there is no longer a recognised dependence of man upon man—a recognised claim to obedience on the one hand, and to protection on the other. Those days have passed away, and it is vain and idle, even were it desirable, to think of restoring them. But one risk, one danger to which we are now exposed in that higher social state upon which England is entering, is that of carrying into social science the idea, the maxim, which economically is true, but true only in the strict economical sense—namely, that the relations of employer and employed—of the poor and of the wealthy—can be regulated only by the principle of supply and demand. That is not morally true, and never can be; and our present state in regard to that question is merely one of transition—one which will last only until the relations of mankind under the altered circumstances of this century are better understood.

Do not imagine for a moment, from anything I have said, that I wish to reproach manufacturing employers with any indifference to the welfare of the multitudes among whom

they live. I know that it is far otherwise. I have seen it in a hundred instances; and, if a comparison were drawn between the state of the manufacturing and agricultural population, I apprehend there is little doubt which would have the advantage. I speak not in reproach, but in envy—in envy of the advantages enjoyed by those who can deal with a large and intelligent population concentrated within a narrow space. In rural districts, do what you will, it is not easy to set up a club, a school, a library, an institute, on any but the smallest scale—distances are too great—population is too sparse—there is not the same habit of acting in concert—a thousand obstacles exist of which you fortunately know nothing here. Therefore, all that I contend for is, not that little has been done, but that there exists an opportunity, of which I am sure advantage will be taken, of doing more.

I must ask you to pardon me this digression; and, returning to the immediate occasion of this assemblage, let us consider what are mechanics' institutions. What at their outset were they meant to be, and what may they become? Of these institutions, taking altogether large and small, rich and poor, flourishing and depressed, there are now in the United Kingdom about 900, perhaps rather more. All date within the present century—most within the last twenty-five years; they are increasing still, and probably will increase, until no town or large village remains unprovided in this respect. But it would be idle to deny that, in general, the quality of the teaching given is insufficient, whatever may be the case with its amount. They are not what they ought to be—not what they were meant to be—not what they may be made.

What is the reason of it? It is best to look all faults and all difficulties in the face, for thus only can we find a remedy. First, I would observe, that circumstances have materially altered. Thirty—twenty years ago—there were no public libraries, no museums, no lecture-halls, no news-rooms for the people—scarcely a school except the village school, where the mere rudiments of instruction, reading and writing, were

acquired. All those various purposes had to be served, all those objects accomplished, by one and the same agency. To a great extent it is so still, though the necessity no longer exists ; and thus it comes to pass that funds, originally small, have been dispersed and divided among many plans—all good in themselves—until not enough is left to carry out any effectually. Now in that respect, again, the requirements of the time have changed. Your town has now, what all should have, a free public library. The need, therefore, for a large collection of books in direct connection with the Mechanics' Institute is less pressing. News-rooms, again, at a low price, have been opened in many places—I do not know whether it is so here—and found to answer as separate concerns. Lecturing, though to a certain extent it holds its ground, has fallen considerably in public esteem as a means of teaching. Some years ago the public were wearied, and not much instructed, by many itinerant teachers, who went about the country rather advertising themselves than really diffusing knowledge, and mere single desultory discourses on miscellaneous subjects are now in small request. The special function of mechanics' institutions is therefore confined, owing to the causes I have named, within comparatively narrow limits. They must take new grounds, make their duties more definite than hitherto, or prepare for a competition which it is not probable they can sustain. They ought to be, in fact, provincial colleges for those who want the leisure and the means to complete their education elsewhere than in their own neighbourhood.

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And now, feeling that I have long occupied your time, and wishing to draw to a close, I ask indulgence only for a few words more. It is not at this time nor in this place that I would touch on matters of national concern. Zeal will be impetuous in a good cause, and talent loves to display itself in controversy ; but true wisdom is peaceable ; and we meet here to seek occasion for agreement, not difference. Therefore it is that subjects which relate to the government and

administration of this realm are both by rule, and by that common understanding which is better than rule, banished from these our meetings. But there is one principle of administration—a principle which in theory, and in the abstract, indeed, has always been allowed, though only of late attempted to be embodied in any legislative act—so closely connected with the object of institutions like these, that to allude to its application is natural and a part of my duty. I mean the principle laid down by the first Napoleon—than whom no man applied it more largely, and to whose marvellous success it contributed in no small degree—that of an open career offered to merit and talent. I mean that principle which has equality and justice for its basis, not an impossible and a tyrannical equality of social status as between man and man, but equal chances given, equal opportunities afforded, equal favour shown to all whose ambition or patriotism aspires to distinction in the service of England. I mean that principle which admonishes the wealthy and the powerful, that in the career of open intellectual competition neither riches nor influence nor connection will avail them anything ; and which says to the poor and friendless candidate—friendless, but conscious of abilities which demand only scope for action—'Rely neither on the patronage of the powerful, nor yet on that popular favour which is so often ill bestowed—but trust to the keenness of your own intellect, to the strength of your own will, to the perseverance which, shrinking not from long and monotonous labour, endures to the end—and be sure that those qualities—their existence in you once proved under a system framed expressly to develop and call them forth—will be duly recognised and amply rewarded.' That is the principle set forth by those who have of late years taken in hand to reform the civil administration of the country. No doubt there are difficulties in the way of its application—difficulties exaggerated by prejudice and by the natural dread of what is new and untried—but still difficulties needing to be well weighed and carefully considered. But in the admission and recognition of the principle itself there is,

apart from the details which may be necessary for its successful working, an actual present gain to society, and a glorious promise of future progress.

No nation can be politically safe—no community can be said to rest on a sound social basis—where intellect and ambition—legitimate ambition—fail to find a free upward course. The strongest mind must always rule; the question is only whether it shall rule by means allowed or by means forbidden. Trouble and discontent, in all ages and in all countries, have arisen far less from the physical sufferings of the masses than from the thwarted and baffled desires of an aspiring few. Those desires and that ambition are to be guided, not depressed. They are useful—they are nationally honourable—they are a public benefit where a channel has been provided for them to flow in; and only in the absence of such a channel—only when they are left to find or make their own course—do they become dangerous. I say, then, on every ground, whether of individual or of national advantage—as a matter of justice—for the sake of education—for the sake of political stability—it should be the policy of those who govern to stimulate by inducements and to reward by employment the acquisition and display of mental power in whatever class. But while I speak of that new incentive to study and self-culture—for as such it will be felt by thousands—I am far from saying that it ought to be, or will be, an incentive to all; and I do say that not to any one should it be put forward as the sole or leading motive. There is an old fable—you know it well—of one who, obeying instructions left in his father's will, dug over his whole estate in search of buried treasure. The treasure was not there, but the harvest repaid him. And so to you, I say, though knowledge may not bring the wealth which many expect, nor the fame and advancement which some, perhaps, desire, it will bring, in the mere fact of its possession, a worthier recompense than these, and none who seek it will ever have cause to complain or to say—'I have laboured in vain.'

III

MISS NIGHTINGALE—WOMAN'S WORK

MANCHESTER: JANUARY 1856

WHEN one of the first authors of this project requested me to give it, by public speech or otherwise, such aid as was in my power, I accepted the offer very gladly, because it seemed to me to involve the fulfilment of two duties: one appealing to the intellect, the other to the feelings: one the duty of gratitude and recognition for public services rendered, the other, that of aiding, according to our means, an important and promising social movement.

It can be shown, I think, that the Nightingale fund attains both these objects. Of the service rendered by Miss Nightingale to our army in the field it is quite too late to speak. There is no part of England, no city or county, scarcely a considerable village, where some cottage household has not been comforted amidst its mourning for the loss of one who had fallen in war, by the assurance that his last moments were watched, and his worst sufferings soothed, by that care, at once tender and skilful, which no man, and few women, could have shown. But it is not merely individuals who have been thus helped. The State also has received benefit, and that to a degree which we hardly appreciate: for where a danger has been warded off, its magnitude is seldom realised.

The present war—if the rumour which has just reached me be true, I hope I may say the past war: I do not refer to it for any purpose that can provoke controversy or contradiction—has been commenced and carried on under new conditions of society. In all past wars waged abroad little was known,

at least to the masses, respecting the everyday details of life before the enemy. Men who stayed at home read of battles won, or towns taken, skilful manœuvres of generals, and daring acts of personal courage performed by soldiers; but never since man began to live and fight on earth (two events nearly contemporaneous) has the entire existence of an army, its daily domestic life, been sketched for the satisfaction of those who stayed behind in England. The newspaper correspondence from the Crimea, with its benefits and its abuses, is a feature of war singularly characteristic of our time, and impossible in any other. What was the effect of these disclosures? They dispelled a good many illusions—they stripped war of much of its romance, and showed beneath a splendid exterior scenes painful and horrible; they told the masses of this country, the class from which soldiers are taken, fairly what they had to expect, and thus enabled them, before deciding to serve, to make an intelligent and not a blind choice. Well, then, under these circumstances it was no slight service to the State as such, no slight aid given to the country in the crisis of its struggle, that the recruit here in England should know and feel that wherever else apathy, or ignorance, or carelessness might prevail, there was one condition of his military career, and that the most trying of all, in which his sufferings would not be overlooked, and his wants would be efficiently cared for. But more than this—and without reference to the special emergencies of the time—I believe most of those who have thought on social subjects will incline to confirm the last words of that good man, Talfourd, to the effect that the disunion of classes is the worst evil of modern society.

Now, what causes that disunion? Allowing for external causes, I say still, in the main it is individual selfishness. Each class is apt to give too little and expect too much. The rich think themselves distrusted; the poor neglected. One often claims confidence which has not been earned; the other sometimes asks aid which cannot be given. And in this condition of things those are benefactors to the community, by example and teaching, who by any act of self-sacrifice—not

the mere giving of superfluous wealth, or equally superfluous leisure, but the giving of themselves, their labour, their health, perhaps their life—prove practically that they hold the faith of universal human brotherhood, that they hold that faith in action as well as speculation, on weekdays as well as Sundays, outside the church as well as within it. Such efforts, whatever direction they take, admonish the prosperous, encourage the afflicted, humanise and harmonise all. These, then, are the claims of Miss Nightingale. She and those who went forth with her have relieved a vast mass of suffering, saved many lives, made many deaths easy, aided the State, and, by an example of personal heroism, raised the moral tone of the community. Now, true heroism is not so plentiful that we can afford to let it pass unrecognised—if not for the honour of those who show it, yet, as was rightly said, very much for our own. The best test of a nation's moral state is the kind of claim which it selects for honour. And, with the exception of Howard, the prison reformer, I know no person besides Miss Nightingale, who, within the last hundred years, within this island, or perhaps in Europe, has voluntarily encountered dangers so imminent, and undertaken offices so repulsive, working for a large and worthy object, in a pure spirit of duty towards God and compassion for man.

But there is another point of view in which Miss Nightingale's expedition stands out from the common course of human action. It is not easy everywhere, especially in England, to set about doing what no one has done before. Many persons will undergo considerable risks, even that of death itself, when they know that they are engaged in a cause which, besides approving itself to their consciences, commands sympathy and approval, when they know that their motives are appreciated and their conduct applauded. But in this case custom was to be violated, precedent broken through, the surprise, sometimes the censure, of the world to be braved. And do not underrate that obstacle. We hardly know the strength of those social ties that bind us until the moment when we attempt to break them. There is a pressure which

custom and connection exercise upon the members of society, which modifies conduct, and which seems often to leave to the weaker among us scarcely any share in forming their own characters and careers. Now mark what, by breaking through customs and prejudices, Miss Nightingale has effected for her sex. She has opened to them a new profession, a new sphere of usefulness. I do not suppose that, in undertaking her mission, she thought much of the effect which it might have on the social position of women. Yet probably no one of those who has made that question a special study has done half as much as she towards its settlement. A claim for more extended freedom of action, based on proved public usefulness in the highest sense of the word, with the whole nation to look on and bear witness, is one which must be listened to, and cannot be easily refused.

At this point I may notice some objections which have been, or may be, urged against our proposition. You may be told that, though Miss Nightingale deserves all honour, the promoters of this fund are only seeking to acquire popularity at her expense—to share her triumph without having shared her labours. The facts refute that charge. We claim no credit, for we merit none. We are simply giving utterance to a sentiment which we did not originate, which we do not profess exclusively to represent, and which we find already diffused through the length and breadth of the land. On the monument which we desire to raise, no name will be inscribed save one. Again, suspicions have been uttered, though without one particle of proof, that the design submitted to you had in it something of a sectarian or superstitious character. Were the fact so, I for one would wash my hands of it and advise all whom I could reach to do the same. But the only organisation we propose or desire to establish is one of pure, general, unsectarian benevolence—a sentiment which, I rather imagine, belongs to no particular era or opinion, but is just as old and as widely spread as the human race itself. Lastly, and in that plea there is more weight, I have heard it said that, before applying for money in a city like Manchester, we

ought to have been prepared with a plan more definite and detailed than that laid before you. My answer is—much must be left undecided if free play is to be given to the judgment and experience of Miss Nightingale. It is not rules, not forms, not paper cheques or guarantees, that make an enterprise prosper; it is the living, unfettered human energy. You ought to know that in Manchester, if others don't, and I believe you do know it. Without a rare, original talent, this work could not be done at all; and with such a talent the best thing you can do is to let it work out its own ends in its own way. We promise to leave Miss Nightingale free and unhampered; and we believe that is the best guarantee for efficiency we can give.

And now, turning from the personal part of the question, a word as to the project which, through her friends, Miss Nightingale has put forth to the people of England. She wishes to establish here a superior class of trained hospital nurses. That the thing is possible no one doubts. On the Continent it has existed for more than a thousand years. We hear of it in France as early as the seventh century; we hear of it again in the time of the Crusades, when soldiers returning from war in Palestine filled Europe with wounds and disease; and in Flanders, at the end of the last war, an association of this kind called forth the admiration of the Protestant philanthropist, Howard. But it is not only in Roman Catholic countries that such institutions have existed. At Kaiserswerth, near Düsseldorf, on the Rhine, a similar association has been set up during the last thirty years, under Protestant management, which now includes 190 nurses, either employed or in training. These are instances of success actually achieved; and if you want proof that something of the kind is needed in England, remember that not many years ago Sir Edward Parry, the Arctic discoverer, seeing (which we have all heard of) the faults of the existing system of hospital nursing, endeavoured to remedy its defects at the Naval Hospital, Haslar, by a public appeal for nurses of a higher class. That appeal was not answered. Prejudice and habit were too strong. The attempt fell to the ground; and I believe

it would fail now. I, at least, should despair, were there not enlisted in the cause talent and energy such as few men or women possess, and were there not at the same time a degree of enthusiasm, roused by the exertion of those talents, such as rarely exists on any subject of social and peaceable interests. It is that combination which renders the enterprise hopeful, and success more than probable.

One further word and I have done. I suppose no one has reflected seriously on the social tendencies of the age without seeing that to provide for women fitting employment of the higher sort is one of its problems—not the least important, and not the most easy to solve. It is idle to say that a woman's whole sphere of duty lies at home. Many have no home; many who have are not required to give to it—cannot employ in it—all the energy which they possess. For such, what active pursuit does the world supply? The bustling life of man is unsuited for them, and happy it is so. Mere study and contemplation cannot suffice for any one. The temperament which makes authors and artists is rare. To visit the poor is well; but visits of mere friendship and sympathy cannot form a large part in the life of any one. And as the form which religion in the present day assumes is eminently that of benevolence, and as we begin to recognise that the best way—some would say the only way—of serving God is by helping man, it is natural to expect that many in all ranks, and especially those who in their private relations are solitary, cheerless, it may be afflicted, should find the greatest satisfaction to conscience, and the most suitable remedy for their own distress, in alleviating human suffering in its simplest and severest forms. Put this in their power, and you will set them free from the most painful of all sensations which can afflict an active mind and a sensitive temperament —the pain of compulsory idleness, of duty undischarged, faculties consciously unemployed, opportunities of good passing by unimproved. In the hope of this deliverance I commend this project to your patronage, asking you by one and the same act to honour merit, to lessen suffering, and to give to female energy and charity free scope in a new channel.

IV

ADVANTAGES OF STUDY TO BUSY MEN—SUBJECTS OF STUDY

Oldham: September 1856

It is common to contend (and the objection weighs with many who are otherwise our friends) that the mechanic, the operative, the tradesman, the man immersed in business, has no time to learn anything thoroughly, that he must be a smatterer only, and will merely acquire a taste which he can never indulge. I want to say a word on that point, because the objection, if well founded, would be almost fatal. I believe it is not well founded, and I will tell you the reason. It is true that most, perhaps all, of those whom your Lyceum will instruct are not men of leisure; but it is not true that a large amount of leisure is requisite in order to obtain a considerable proportion of learning. The brain, like the body, can only bear a certain amount of active exertion—nay, of all bodily organs it is the most delicate, the most easily put out of repair, the most difficult to set right when once disorganised. Now, it is liable to suffer in two ways—from too little work in those whose labour is mechanical only, or who do no work at all; from too much work in those whose labour employs chiefly or exclusively the intellectual faculties. It is idle, therefore, to suppose that the majority of men, though free from any pressure of business, though independent of a profession or trade, can, whatever the amount of their leisure, or however much they may desire it, occupy anything like the whole, or even the greater part, of their time in study. If no external circumstances interpose to limit their exertions Nature will and does. The mind only retains its freshness

for a limited time; if that time be exceeded, exhaustion ensues, little is learnt, and the seeds of future mischief are sown in the constitution.

What I contend for, then, is this—that no man willing to study need despond because he can only command a portion, it may be, of his evenings, while others are masters of the whole day. It is bad arithmetic in such matters to compute that four times as much can be learnt in four hours as in one. Just as reasonably might one argue that, because one good dinner daily gives health and strength, therefore four such dinners every day would make a man four times as strong, and four times as healthy. Just as reasonably might one affirm, what all who have looked into the elements of finance know to be untrue, that if you double the rate of a tax you will double the amount it produces. The fact is, Nature intends that we should develop all our faculties, that we should work our whole organisation in turn, and not a part of it only. The man who exerts his brain only, and the man who exerts his muscles only, is equally violating her laws, and those laws are never violated with impunity. I do not want to overstate my case. I am not denying that the hours of labour are many, and that the cares of life press heavily on the working man who is also a student. But I affirm that the obstacles which labour places in the way of intellectual advance, though real, are less formidable than they look, while by their nature they save the student from other dangers quite as real which beset the man whose time is entirely his own—the danger, on the one hand, of an idle and relaxed habit; the danger, on the other, of mental wear and tear induced by not knowing when to leave off. Even four hours in the week, or rather more than two hundred in the year, regularly and earnestly devoted to one branch of thought, will carry an intelligent man very far in any study.

Speaking in this place, I need hardly notice the old cavil raised against institutions like these, that their promoters look only to the development of the intellect, and neglect the moral faculties. No doubt there are instances where grievous

moral imperfections have been shown by able and cultivated men; and, on the other hand, we all know that very ignorant persons may be exemplary in their conduct, although in cases where remarkable ignorance is found associated with high morality I think it will usually be observed that the ignorance has not been voluntary, but the inevitable result of unfavourable circumstances. But the general rule I take to be this, that a healthy organisation, well developed, will gain in every direction by whatever it gains in one. In the physical part of our nature the healthy body and the healthy brain are more likely at least to go together than either of them with the reverse. And so it is with the mind and the moral sense; when the eyes of the intellect are opened, and Imagination is summoned to fulfil her legitimate function—when the awful vastness of the universe appears, and the wonderful mechanism of man is unveiled, and the not less wonderful system of moral checks and counter-checks by which the fabric of society is rendered self-sustaining, strikes full and clear upon the view, the mere fact of familiarity with ideas so high and so wide-reaching produces a frame of mind incompatible with the taking pleasure in those low and sensual and degrading pursuits which constitute the bulk of immorality as it exists in England.

But there is another point of view in which these institutions may be considered, and one to which I attach great importance. Recollect what modern society is. Recollect what modern labour is. We bring together men in masses; we employ them in mechanical pursuits. The very perfection of the work done—the cause of that perfection, division of labour, carried to the highest point—tends to render occupation more and more monotonous; so that the intellect, craving stimulus, asking for variety, is starved. For, to an active brain, intellectual inaction—the want of subjects for thought—is quite as painful as to the habitually inert temperament is the unaccustomed toil of thought. What, then, I ask, becomes of the vast masses of intelligent men and women who congregate in these towns? What are our national

amusements? None—or next to none. Even the simplest of all pleasures, the enjoyment of natural beauty, is rarely possible. The leisure hours here fall mostly at night, when outdoor pleasures are inappropriate, even if the neighbourhood of our towns afforded more facilities for such pleasures than they do. We want, then, besides teaching for those who will be instructed, rational amusements for those who only desire to be interested.

I am not ashamed of putting that prominently forward as an object which we ought to keep in view. Health is weakened, disease generated, life shortened, by the depression of spirits which follows upon an unstimulated existence. Men die for want of cheerfulness, as plants die for want of light. That is a fact to which you may get medical testimony in plenty; and it is to this very difficulty of finding pleasures—a difficulty arising in part out of the accidents of our social state, in part out of the grave, earnest, energetic, reflective, but rather sombre cast of mind which for many centuries has distinguished the people of this nation—that I ascribe that habit of excessive social indulgence which is still the principal reproach upon our national morals and manners. I affirm, then, that in every point of view, intellectual, moral, even sanitary, an institution such as this is intended to be—partly social, partly literary, useful to the few who study in earnest, attractive to the many whose chief aim is amusement—has in both those capacities a real and substantial value. Your lectures, your reading rooms, your evening classes, your lending library—for that essential element of popular usefulness I hope it is not proposed to omit—will each draw to you subscribers, each probably subscribers of a different class. The establishment of an athenæum, a lyceum, an institute, call it which you will, in every large town of England is no longer a mere luxury which may be enjoyed or dispensed with at pleasure, but has become an essential and integral part of our social organisation.

I know all that has been and that may be said against these institutions; and it is possible that their actual results may

disappoint unreasonable expectations on the one hand as they have dispelled unworthy fears on the other. But I deny *in toto* what is sometimes affirmed—that the experiment of their establishment has been hitherto a failure. Bear in mind that it is only of late years that the prejudices once entertained against them have been overcome, and that they have ceased to bear a distinctively party character. Bear in mind that only within the last few years have there issued from the press those cheap and valuable publications which have so much facilitated the formation of provincial libraries. Remember, too, that while churches, schools, colleges, hospitals are endowed, institutes have been almost universally left to live from hand to mouth with little or no capital in reserve, dependent for their very existence upon every temporary fluctuation of popularity.

Recollect, lastly, that, if official statistics may be trusted (and the private experience of most of us will, I believe, confirm them), school attendance in England is only one-half of what it should be in order to give every young person growing up a fair elementary training. Under these disadvantages, with prejudices to combat, with inadequate means, with no permanent funds, and with only one-half the people prepared to receive their teaching, these literary institutions have increased until they now number more than 800, and new ones are being founded daily. In my belief, their sphere of action admits of vast enlargement. I hold that they are destined to perform, as regards the more numerous class of society, the same functions as those which the Universities discharge towards the wealthier. They combine two advantages of which it is scarcely possible to over-estimate the value —first, that members of every religious denomination meet here upon equal terms; next, that they start unencumbered with traditions, taking as their point of departure the educational ideas—not of any former, but—of the present age.

Next comes the question—when you have got your athenæum, what is it there intended to teach? That is a large subject, and one which, in deference to your time, I shall

touch on in the shortest possible manner. First, I think it is desirable that intellectual competition should be stimulated in every possible manner; and I heard, therefore, with peculiar pleasure some words which fell from the president of the institution this morning, as to the propriety of establishing examinations and rewarding efficiency with prizes. What is read with some definite and tangible end in view is apt to be more carefully studied and longer remembered than what is read with a vague and general idea of improvement. Next, I hold that a wide latitude should be given to individual taste. What a man wishes to learn he will learn better, more quickly, and with more profit to himself than what he undertakes to study merely upon the recommendation of others, even though the latter may be more generally useful. Subject to this qualification I will mention those topics which seem most likely to be of service.

I see in a prospectus which has been issued mention of French classes and others for the teaching of languages. I am far from depreciating such studies; their interest is great, their use is great even for those who stay at home, much more for those who travel; but where time and opportunity are limited, and where no special inducement exists, I doubt whether the acquiring of languages is the most necessary or profitable branch of knowledge. Words, after all, are only vehicles of thought; the stores of thought accumulated in our own tongue are already immense; and if much of life be passed in that which is rather preparation for study than study itself, little time may remain to complete the building for which such wide and ample foundations have been laid. It seems to me—but remember that I give my opinions on these subjects with the utmost deference—that the foundation of a complete and rational education lies in the knowledge of natural laws, as deduced from recorded facts; a knowledge, first, of those laws by which the inorganic world is governed —as those which regulate astronomical, geological, and chemical phenomena; next, of those laws which control organised existences—a branch which includes physiology in

all its departments; lastly, a knowledge of that which, for want of a more recognised term, I must call sociology, embracing the investigation of social problems, and enabling us to trace the paths along which human action has moved in all countries and ages.

I cannot go far into these topics here, or else I think I could show that the order which I have named, from the study of the simplest structure—inorganic matter—up to that of the highest and most complex—the human mind—is no arbitrary progress, but one which Nature herself dictates and directs. I may be asked what man, unless solely and professedly a philosopher, can find leisure for such inquiries? I reply, it is not necessary to be an astronomer, a geologist, a chemist, a physiologist, in order to learn what have been the principal results of human thought in those departments, or what is their inter-connection one with another. The slow progress of discovery affords no measure of the time required to appreciate the results of discovery. It takes ages to make the road which when made may be travelled over in a few years. If interrogated as to the use of such investigations, I would point out that the two great questions which an intelligent mind on beginning to reflect naturally puts are these: 'What am I?' and 'What is this universe around me?' To give an answer, however partial and incomplete, to these queries has been the effort of the human intellect during more than 3,000 years, and may be for 3,000 more. No man is so dull that they do not interest him; none ever has been or ever can be so acute that they do not perplex and baffle him. In comparison with such reflections to talk of what we call the practical applications of science is indeed descending low; yet these applications—never the first object, often not in any degree the object of the philosopher—have doubled the wealth and power of England, and incalculably lessened the pressure of human suffering from material causes.

In concluding on this head, I would observe that in England we need to study man's works less, and nature more; and even where we apply ourselves to investigate the vast course

of human action, we are in the habit of ascribing too much importance to an almost mechanical recollection of facts, and too little to the establishment of those generalisations which give past facts almost their sole importance for us. I do not wish to speak in the language of accusation, or of complaint; yet it does seem strange that a man may leave either of the great universities, after a school and college training which together have extended over ten years, an accomplished classic, an able mathematician, yet wholly unacquainted with external nature, ignorant of the principle upon which a common steam-engine is constructed, ignorant even of the mechanism which he carries about with him in his own body, and utterly unversed in the first principles of that law of the land under which he lives. I am, I own it, one of those who say, 'Give us a little more of this kind of knowledge in the first instance, and let the ornamental parts of teaching come later, if there are time and inclination for it.' I look in education to the practical effect which it is likely to produce on life; and, although I know well that theory is one thing, practice another, yet I do believe (to take one instance of many) that if men knew a little more about the air they breathe and the water they drink there would be a saving of many lives, now destroyed or shortened by deficient sanitary arrangements. So, again, if men understood better the functions of the brain there would be fewer deaths from over-work, from mental excitement, or even from intemperance. Generally speaking, I believe that for one person who breaks a physical law with a full clear consciousness that he is breaking it—knowing what he is doing and foreseeing the consequences—there are 100 who break those laws in sheer ignorance, and whom a little knowledge would render cautious. So, again, when I said just now that it seemed to me unnatural that a man should be held to be fully educated who knew not the first elements of legal science, I did not, and do not, suppose that law should be studied by a layman as it is by a lawyer. But every man, though it may never happen to him to have to set foot within a court of justice, has something to do with

evidence; it is surely of use to every one to know, when an improbable tale is told him in a matter which concerns his interests, what are the chances of that tale being true or false; and in works which treat of evidence those chances are minutely analysed and the collective results of many men's experience is brought to bear on the subject.

Again, dealing with another branch of social science, I may venture to say, even here, that if the first rules of political economy had been a little better understood both by governments and communities, the worst sufferings which have prevailed in these manufacturing districts (some of them self-inflicted, some of them the faults of others) might have been avoided, or to a great extent diminished. To sum up in a word, I mean this—that the end of all human teaching is human action; that that teaching is most valuable which tends to direct and economise action; that such teaching must concern itself mainly with two things—the laws which govern inanimate nature and the laws which govern man; and that whatever does not add to our knowledge on one or other of these subjects is, comparatively speaking, of little value. And herein, as I think, one great merit of institutions like these consists, that, being tied down by no statutes, no founders' wills, no traditions of immemorial antiquity, they not only supply instruction to the people, but they supply that kind of instruction for which a popular demand exists. They follow the national taste; they do not, in attempting to direct that taste, pervert it. Long may this state of things endure; and in education, as in other matters, may the transition from past to present habits of thought take place, as in England such transitions mostly do, by no demolition of that which exists, by no sudden disruption of ancient ties, but by the gradual and almost imperceptible accommodation of all intelligent minds to that which all perceive to be inevitable in the course of events.

V

EDUCATION—ITS EFFECT ON NATIONAL LIFE

LEEDS: OCTOBER 21, 1861

WHEN, about this time last year, I was honoured by a request from the members of the Leeds Institution to occupy the position which I now hold, I hesitated, because it seemed to me, as it always seems, a serious thing for any man to bring together 1,000 or 1,500 of his fellow-citizens to listen to him, and to inflict on so large a number the most irreparable of all losses, that of their time, unless he has reason to think that something will come of it beyond a mere temporary display; unless he can reasonably hope that some idea will be left, some impression be made, some action, however small, result from their meeting. Without the prospect of some such practical result, assemblies like this, however vast, however respectable, however illustrious, by those who compose them, are not really more important, while to most of us they are less interesting, than the performances we witness on the stage. For, whatever the habits of orators and politicians may lead them to think, public speaking is valuable only when and as it leads to something being accomplished. Just as in private life one of the most dangerous habits into which a well-meaning man can fall is that of perpetually making good resolutions, which he takes no step to carry into practice, so a community is never less likely to make real progress in any matter with which it may have to deal, than when its members get into the way of repeating from time to time that this thing and that thing ought to be done, and take credit thereupon for their earnestness in doing it, without applying the only real

test of sincerity in any cause, that is setting to work with their brains, their purses, and if need be their personal exertions, to do it for themselves.

Now, in regard to the question which we have to consider to-night, that of education, it appears to me that there has been a good deal of talk, and also a good deal of action; but with a few notable exceptions, the talkers have for the most part not been the workers, and the workers have been content to labour silently. And so much is this felt to be the case, that we may notice, on occasions like the present, that instead of those dissertations, or declamations, on the advantages of learning which used to be so common, and which, with all their merits, had certainly not that of novelty, there is on the part both of audience and speakers an almost instinctive desire to turn to some other topic; and one man lectures on volunteers, another on sanitary reform, a third on co-operative industry, a fourth, perhaps, on foreign politics and the affairs of Europe. I will not tell you whether I am going to follow those examples or not, but I will say, in the first place, that you at Leeds have cause to congratulate yourselves that among you educational progress has been something more than a name. But it is precisely because you have shown this spirit, because elementary teaching has increased in amount, and, I hope, improved in quality also, that the need is more and more felt for institutions like that whose anniversary we are holding to-night. A careful local inquiry has proved that in this place the average age at which boys leave school is ten years; and with the fact the explanation likewise is given, for it is stated that at that age they can earn, in ordinary times, from 4*s*. to 5*s*. weekly, or from 10*l*. to 12*l*. in the twelve months.

We are apt to blame parents for taking away their children so young, and no doubt it is one of the chief practical obstacles to improved teaching; but it is only just to recollect that to a family which earns, perhaps, in all 50*l*. in the year, a sacrifice of 10*l*. even is relatively far heavier than any which parents in the upper or middle classes of society

are called upon to make for the instruction of their children. And when to that consideration is added the natural wish for independence on the part of the lad himself—the wish to help his parents, to gain his own living, at least in part, and to begin life in earnest on his own account, a feeling strong in all countries—stronger, I suspect, in this country than in any other throughout the world, except, perhaps, America—I believe that we should be deceiving ourselves, and expecting from our neighbours more than we have a right to expect, if we looked forward to any considerable extension of the time passed at school as likely soon to take place. If that conclusion be correct, one result obviously follows. So far from thinking that into our ordinary day schools a more extended range of teaching than the present can be introduced, those who have watched the progress of education have more and more come to believe that the fault of modern education, so far as children and young boys are concerned, has lain in the opposite direction, and that elementary teaching has suffered by the natural ambition of masters to crowd a great deal into a limited time.

I was reading the other day an extract from the last report of the Irish National Board, whose schools are probably as well managed as any in these islands; and I found it there stated that, out of 165,000 children examined in reading, only 19 per cent. were able to read the higher, or less easy, book lessons with ease and intelligence, while, in addition to that 19 per cent., 38 per cent. more were able to read the easier and simpler book in which they were tested. Now that leaves 43 per cent., or more than two-fifths, who could not read with any degree of correctness; and in regard of writing the results are even less satisfactory, for only 51 per cent., or hardly more than half, out of 91,000 children examined, were able to write fairly. No doubt we should remember that the examination included children of various ages, and if only those had been selected who were on the point of leaving the school the result would have been more favourable; but without laying much stress on these figures,

which I cite by way of illustration rather than of proof, I would appeal to every master, to every clergyman, to every inspector or patron of a school, whether a large proportion of the children do not pass through the routine of lessons (more or less regularly attended, as the case may be), literally without carrying away anything which will be of use to them in future life. They are able, perhaps, to read, but with so much difficulty that they never do it unless from sheer necessity: the habit is not formed, and in a few years the power is lost. They may have learnt to write—that is, they may know the shapes of the letters, but it is pain and grief to them to use a pen, and, unless inclination or circumstances lead them to improve in later life, the time they have passed at school is to all intents and purposes wasted.

The truth in this matter has been spoken out plainly and sensibly by Mr. Watkins, the inspector for this district, in his general report for last year. He says, in words which I only abridge a little, 'We know this, and we know also the cause. It is the shortness of the school life. You cannot cram into the space of two or three years the instruction which ought to occupy five or six, any more than you can eat at two or three meals the food which ought to last for a month. You cannot in months create habits which require years for their formation. Yet this is what is being done now, and must be done, so long as the inexorable demands of labour continue.' And he points out the remedy—evening classes, night schools, opportunities of learning given to those whose daily labours cannot be interfered with, but who with that labour are willing (as in these northern towns many thousands are) to combine some pursuits which may keep them from sinking into mere machines for the production of wealth. I apprehend that the want of such opportunities is being more and more felt, and I lay so much stress upon them, and believe so little in the possibility of doing without them, that I do not hesitate to say, if three-fourths of all those who attend day schools could be sent out into the world knowing thoroughly how to read, write, and

cipher, having acquired in addition those habits of order, discipline, and neatness which a well-arranged school gives, and having been taught, either at school or at home, the elementary truths of religion, I would gladly compound for their knowing little or nothing else, feeling sure that those who had got so far would not stop on the road. Various opinions have been, and will be, expressed on the new educational code which has excited so much sensation; it is not my business to discuss its provisions in this place, but in so far as it tends to confine school teaching to simple elementary matters, and to test the merit of the teachers by the plain standard of what the pupils have learnt, in so far (without entering into the question of pledges given or expectations disappointed) it seems to me a wise and rational measure.

There is one defect in most schools with which I am acquainted, to which I am glad to see that attention is being called—I mean the over-length of school-hours; the too great portion of each day which children are required to pass in a crowded room, not always well ventilated, and where entire bodily inaction is made compulsory. It is not easy for grown men to go back to the feelings of their earlier years, and to understand how an amount of bodily quiet and mental application, which to us is natural and easy, can be at an earlier age an absolute violation of the laws of our bodily state. Sundays especially—and in what I am going to say I do not refer to the 35,000 Sunday school children of Leeds—I dare say it is otherwise here—Sundays especially are apt to be made to young people days of torment rather than of rest. The three wants of our system of primary teaching are—more regular attendance; limitation, in the majority of cases, of school hours to a moderate amount; and limitation of teaching to such subjects as can be thoroughly mastered. It was the custom some years ago to lament over the small number of scholars in proportion to the population. In that respect there is now, I do not say nothing, but comparatively little to complain of.

Another conclusion, too, is forced upon us—that no

scheme for the extension of teaching is likely to succeed which aims at superseding, in any considerable degree, the exertions of those who are already in the field. What we want is, not so much to augment the number of schools as to utilise those we have; and that brings me directly to the object of our meeting here, for I conceive that it is only by giving the means of carrying on instruction in later years that we can create even a wish for it, either among parents or children. Depend upon it, a father who has left school at ten years old (if he ever was there), and has not looked into a book since, will not, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, care much what kind of teaching his son gets. Now, we all know that it was to supply this want of a more advanced teaching that mechanics' institutes were established thirty-five years ago. They have met with varying success; a few—this, for example—have succeeded; the majority, unquestionably, have failed. And, looking back, it does not seem difficult to understand why they have failed. They mostly began, as you did here, with trying to teach pure science. Now that can never be made attractive to the multitude, it can only attract a few, for thinkers in every class are few. They relied, in many cases, on lectures as means of teaching, and the instruction they gave was desultory and imperfect. They had political and social prejudices to contend against; they rose in days when working men were less well off than now, and had little leisure for thought on matters which did not immediately concern their material interests. Cheap reading did not exist; the public mind was unprepared; and it is fair to add that some of their more prominent advocates, putting forth exaggerated hopes of what might be effected, by that natural display of zeal discredited the comparatively slight result which was effected. Still, I think, they did good. They kept the question of education before the public; they helped the first feeble efforts to spread a sound sanitary knowledge among the people; they materially assisted the first promoters of cheap literature; and where circumstances have been favourable, the crude notions of 1824 have developed

into well-considered schemes, supported by all parties and sects, and really reaching the class for which they are meant.

And now, gentlemen, after all these things have been said, remains the question, 'Assume the means of teaching to be such as you have described, assume that they are used and appreciated, what will come of it all? What is the practical result on our national manners and life?' That is a question often put, not in a hostile or captious spirit, but with a real wish that it should be answered. And it must be asked, and it must be answered, unless we choose merely to repeat ignorantly and at second hand the people's cry. As to the advantage of elementary teaching, of those simple acquirements which are the key to all knowledge, and without which it is hardly possible to get on in life, no one raises a dispute. But it is questioned whether anything beyond this is useful, in the class of life from which mechanics are taken. Well, I say, first, no man doubts the importance of health. To the poor man it is capital, it is bread, it is independence; with all men it goes far to make the difference between a happy or an unhappy life. There is no more real or tangible benefit which you can confer upon a people than when you reduce the rate of mortality and lessen the amount of disease. In the United Kingdom it is estimated that people ought not to die at the yearly rate of more than 17 in 1,000; they do actually die at a rate greatly exceeding this—I think, on an average, 22 or 23 in the 1,000. Now here we have, with our population of 30,000,000, more than 100,000 lives yearly thrown away. What kills them? Not overwork, not famine, not in the majority of cases the hard necessities of their condition; but ignorance, ignorance on their own part or on that of society, of the physical laws of our being.

No doubt there are unhealthy and dangerous trades: there are lives shortened by actual want; but these are comparatively few. Every doctor will tell you that an immense saving of life would take place if only some three or four single things were estimated at their true value—pure air, pure water, sufficient drainage, and healthy bodily exercise

for those who lead sedentary lives. Some one may answer me, 'These are matters, except the last, with which landlords and local authorities have more to do than the people. We can't choose the houses we will live in, we drink the water supplied to us, we breathe the air round us such as it is.' 'Well,' I reply, 'but if the people take interest in these things, if they understand their immense practical importance, there is no danger that landlords or that local authorities won't do their duty. If smoke nuisances are allowed to go on because nobody will exert himself to put them down; if good water is objected to because it costs a little more in the rates; if streets and alleys are left mere nests of fever and pollution for want of a few drains, the fault is not with individuals here and there, the fault is with the public at large, without whose support and encouragement, in an age and country of popular measures, no important work can be carried through.'

Then, as to the habits of those whose occupations are sedentary, I suspect we are few of us aware how rapidly a close indoor existence, where the brain alone is worked, and the muscles do not get fair play, extinguishes health, strength, and in time life itself. Every great city is fed by the influx of strangers from outside. Few, if any, keep up their numbers without such immigration. That is a startling state of things; and it need not be so. Men may live in masses without poisoning one another, and they may be prosperous men of business without sacrificing health to wealth. But they must first have a clear idea of their bodily nature and its requirements; and that is a kind of knowledge which scarcely can ever be out of place. Then there is another sort of teaching of which few persons will deny the usefulness. You well know in these districts how many of the great improvements in arts and manufactures have been made by workers, with only their practical good sense and acquaintance with the details of their business to guide them. Do not you think that such men will work all the better, will keep their eyes more open and their minds more on the stretch for

improvements, if they have taught themselves something of the theory of what they are doing? And this is not labour merely for labour's sake. Life in these northern towns is not fixed and uniform; it is a lottery where with many blanks there are great prizes in the wheel. I do not know a town in Lancashire—and I suppose it is the same here—in which you cannot point out some man who has begun with nothing, and who has made his hundreds of thousands of pounds. No doubt such cases are few, but every man may hope, and for those who, missing the great prizes, yet partially succeed, there is comfort, and honourable independence, and well-earned repose in old age.

Then, take again the relations of labour with capital. I will not repeat the common sneer which accuses men, who differ from their employers as to what they shall receive, of being ignorant of political economy, because I suspect class feeling and class sympathy has had more to do with those unhappy disputes that have arisen than reasoning or calculation. But I see, and I rejoice to see, the movement which is now going on, and which seems likely to supersede strikes to a great extent—the movement in favour of co-operative industry by which men are to become their own employers, to share the profits of the employing class, and practically to acquaint themselves with the risks and responsibilities which that class incur. I say I rejoice to see that movement spreading and extending as it has done during the last two years. I do not speak in order to encourage it, for I believe that encouragement would be as needless as discouragement would be useless. It will make its own way. It appeals to two of the strongest passions that exist among men—the love of personal or class independence and the love of speculation. Those are stimulants amply strong enough; and at this moment, when the coming winter must inevitably bring suffering and loss to many, there may rather be need of a word of caution. But it is a movement sound in principle and right in purpose; and it will, I believe, restore to these districts a healthier tone of feeling on the labour question than has prevailed of late

years. But if this principle of association is to be acted on, with all the judgment and skill which in difficult times it will require, can we say that those who aspire to be—not the tools with which other men work, but the managers of their own concerns, ought not to have as much knowledge of what the rest of the world is thinking and doing, as their means and circumstances will allow?

I say, then, for sanitary improvement—which is, perhaps, the most vital of all questions that affect the national well-being—for inventive improvement, for the keeping up of that manufacturing pre-eminence which we won by hard struggles, and which we must struggle hard if we intend not to lose, for the successful working out of the great social problem with which the operative class is now striving to deal, we want institutions such as this. We want them because they supply a gap in our educational system which cannot be otherwise filled up. We want them, because we believe that great material prosperity, not combined with corresponding intellectual or moral advancement, is for any people an anomalous and unsatisfactory condition. We want them, because we believe that without their help a great part of the two millions a year which the State and the people jointly are spending on the education of the young will be comparatively thrown away. We do not suppose that they will effect marvels, that they will put down drunkenness or crime, or place men who have but little leisure for study and thought on a level with those who can give their whole lives to these pursuits. But we think that they will be a help to many, a pleasure to many more, a check on some moral and physical evils, a hindrance removed out of the way of self-taught men who aspire to rise in life. And so thinking, we shall proceed with pleasure to the principal object of our meeting to-night—that of paying honour, in the presence of this vast concourse, to those who have won early distinction in this institution, and who have thereby, if they will allow me to say so, pledged themselves before their fellow-townsmen to a career of honourable exertion, and of not less honourable ambition.

VI

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

Kirkdale : January 7, 1862

We are here for the purpose of formally opening this building, and in doing so I ought first to say why I consented to preside, and why this meeting is held. It is not a wise thing to make speeches for speaking's sake, nor to expend in words the energy which ought to find a vent in action. But we are met here for a directly practical purpose—that of giving wider publicity to an institution which, in order to be duly supported, requires that its object and working should be made public, since it professes to help those in whom, by no fault of their own, the power of self-help is inevitably wanting, and who can only, in a very slight degree, contribute to its maintenance; while it has no reserve to fall back upon, no capitalised fund to maintain it, but must rely exclusively on such assistance as the liberality—I had almost said, as the sense of social justice—of the people of this neighbourhood may provide. You know, of course, what we mean when we speak of an industrial school. We mean a school in which intellectual teaching beyond the most elementary is not aimed at; in which the pupils are drawn, without exception, from the lowest class of society; and in which, so far from leaving anything to be supplied by the influence and instruction of home, it is often, unhappily, a matter of necessity to isolate the child so far as possible from a home which is to it a school of pauperism, of vice, and of crime. Industrial schools, so to speak, go hand in hand with reformatories, though the two are wholly distinct.

I was one of the persons who took part, though I cannot

claim to have taken a very early part, in bringing about the establishment of reformatory schools before they were recognised and subsidised as they now are by the State; and I well recollect the objection with which we were met—an objection of which it was impossible altogether to deny the truth, when people told us, 'You promise to reclaim children who have fallen into crime; you ask for private subscriptions and public aid for that purpose; but you do nothing for those who under equal difficulties have successfully resisted similar temptations.' Well, that was partly true, and we could only answer that our proposition was good as far as it went, though it did not meet the whole extent of the evil. But experience shows—we may all see it if we choose to open our eyes—that there is a large class wholly apart from that which gets its living by crime, but also separate from that which subsists by regular and steady employment.

In great towns the extremes of civilisation meet; luxury, refinement, intelligence, social comfort, are carried to their highest pitch; and side by side with that luxury there springs up a class among whose members subsistence is as precarious as among those savage tribes which live by hunting wild animals—a class limited, indeed, happily in numbers, but in which pauperism is hereditary, ignorance universal, and the hope of rising to a higher position, that most powerful stimulant of English society, almost entirely wanting. That the fact is so, few persons can doubt. When we read what town missionaries and others similarly employed have to tell us as to the number of those in whom the most elementary notion of religion is absent, not because it has been rejected, but because it has never been presented; when we hear it stated on good sanitary authority that in certain large towns one-half of the children of the poorest class die before the age of five; when another inquiry shows that in a town selected by way of experiment the infantine mortality in that class was just threefold what it was among the wealthier inhabitants; when we compare—which is in fact proving the same thing by another method—the enormous disproportion of the death-

rate between the healthy and what are called the 'low' quarters of the same city—it seems only too clear that, whatever may have been done (and much has been done) to make life easier to those who are born to hardship and toil, there remains yet more to accomplish, and it is far too early to boast of the results obtained.

It is not my purpose now to ask you to consider the causes of the continued existence among us of such a class as I describe, nor yet the chances of what I confidently expect to see—its gradual disappearance. It is enough to say that wherever dense masses of men have been congregated together such a class has always appeared. In crowded populations the tie of neighbourhood and local connection is necessarily weaker. No man can take the same personal interest in half a million of human beings that he takes in the fifty or a hundred families who inhabit the same country village with himself. The feeling of mutual protection and dependence, still powerful in such districts, is here necessarily wanting. Life, too, is busier; men have not leisure to stop on the road and help up their neighbour who has fallen. Distress, when it comes, comes on a larger scale; competition is keener; the rivalry of man with man, which makes the opportunity of the bustling and energetic, thrusts down the feeble into the mire. The rich live apart from the poor, in quarters of their own; even the parochial clergy are few, and, for the most part, poor; and the rapid growth of population in a district whose trade is increasing generally leaves the poorer quarters for a time unprovided with the ordinary appliances of civilisation—without schools or churches, without healthy habitations and efficient drainage, without the charitable institutions which elsewhere exist for the relief of temporary want.

If these things are so—and I think they can be fully proved—there is no need to contend against the argument that institutions like this, founded essentially on a charitable as opposed to a self-supporting basis, are superfluous in the actual state of society. The next question is, are they liable to abuse—are they likely to be used unfairly by parents who

could afford to pay the cost of their children's training? Of that I apprehend there is little danger. It does not take much knowledge of working men and women to be aware that if there is one feeling more deeply rooted in their natures than another, it is their love of independence, their dread of whatever looks like pauperism, their reluctance to accept help, except from members of their own class, so long as they can help themselves. No man knows—no man will ever know—how many, in seasons of distress like this, have gone and will go to the last extremity of suffering before they consent to accept public relief; and I believe that the practical experience of all who have had to do with schools of this sort bears me out in saying that of the boys and girls taken in here, and at schools of the like sort in other places, there is not one in fifty who, if these schools were not open to them, would cross the doors of any other. [The speaker then gave some details as to the work of the school and its results.]

There are other facts to which I might advert, but these are enough as a sample. I say on the strength of them this school is doing a good work, and is doing it well. But it is sometimes easier to found institutions than to support them. Begging is a weary business in the best of causes; those who ask fear to be importunate; those who give are beset with claims; and some find in the very multitude of demands an excuse for complying with few or none. No school can be carried on with method and effect if it is from month to month in danger of stopping from want of funds; and it seems but reasonable, accordingly, that we should endeavour, as far as may be, by regular yearly subscriptions, to place this school out of the reach of pressing want.

Do not suppose because Government aid is granted that other aid is therefore needless. It is only boys who are sent here by the magistrates whose expense will be paid by the State; for the rest we depend on public liberality as before. Many motives here converge to one common end. Simple humanity, even apart from duty, might be enough, if only our imaginations were not too dull, and our thoughts too much

occupied, to have often before us the miserable state of these outcast children of the streets. Love of order, of security, of social peace, ought to lead us to try and remove from our noblest cities a class whose presence in them is a disturbance, a danger, and a disgrace. Policy ought to show us the importance of disproving by our actions the accusation which rises only too quickly to the lips of even patient poverty—the charge that the rich know little of and care little for the suffering of the poor. And, lastly, there is a motive powerful with some of us beyond all these—not wholly powerless, I trust, with any—a motive founded on the belief that wealth is only a temporary trust, that poverty is only a temporary trial, that the largest material resources involve the heaviest moral responsibilities, and that services rendered to the humblest and meanest of mankind are rendered to the Author of our common being.»

VII

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

LIVERPOOL: OCTOBER 23, 1862

I RISE, by the request of the Mayor, to return thanks on behalf of the House of Lords.[1] I am not a member of that House. I have no personal and actual connection with it, and I hope it may be long before I have. But considering the length of time during which the family of which I am a member has been represented in that House, and considering the Mayor's request, I hope you will not think I am exceeding my duty in rising to reply to that toast. Gentlemen, the House of Lords is undoubtedly one of the oldest institutions of this country; and it is one which, notwithstanding all political changes, has contrived even to the present day to retain no inconsiderable share of political power. Thirty years ago, in the days of the great controversy upon the Reform Bill, men used to say that if the bill passed into law, the powers of the House of Lords would fall into disuse, and that all political power would henceforth be transferred to the House of Commons. Looking at things as men looked at them in that moment of excitement, there may have been some reason for that view; but, somehow, political prophecies, as far as I have ever seen, never did come true. And men who live in the midst of great changes are apt to exaggerate the importance of those changes. I think it has been so in this case. From the very foundation of constitutional government in this country, no doubt the predominating power has always lain in the House of Commons rather than in the House of Lords, and it is quite right that it should be so. It was not so merely in the days of Pitt

[1] This speech should be read with those on the same subject delivered in 1870 and 1889.

and Fox, but in the days of Chatham and Walpole. So far the Reform Bill made no change. But when I look to the history of the last thirty years, I find that there have been seven administrations[1]; and when I look to those who have been at the head of those administrations, I find that four out of the seven have had seats in the Lords,—three of those, I observe in passing, being chiefs of Liberal administrations—Lord Grey, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Aberdeen. Of the remaining three one[2] has since accepted a peerage, and another,[3] though sitting in the House of Commons, is a peer of Ireland, and in so far directly connected with the other House of Parliament. Looking at these facts, I think that those who are most zealous for the dignity and for the importance of the House of Lords can hardly deny that during the period that has elapsed since the passing of the Reform Bill that House has had its full share in the administration of public affairs.

No doubt a minister who sits in the House of Lords—a minister or a leading statesman—is exposed to some inconvenience. He cannot defend his policy—he cannot defend himself against attacks in that place where the great battles of Parliamentary parties have, for the most part, been fought out. But there are some countervailing advantages. A minister who is in charge of a laborious department—say, for instance, a Secretary of State—and who has, at the same time, his seat in the House of Commons during the session—that is, during seven months out of the twelve, and during four nights out of every week—is compelled to devote by far the greater part of his working time to attendance in his place in Parliament—he sits there, on an average, from half-past four every afternoon until two o'clock next morning. Well, I am speaking to men of business, and I leave you to judge whether the necessity for that attendance does not, to some extent,

[1] Strictly speaking, eleven administrations and seven different Prime Ministers; and out of the eleven Prime Ministers between 1830 and 1894 eight have been members of the House of Lords: this excludes Lord Palmerston.

[2] Earl Russell.

[3] Lord Palmerston.

interfere with the efficiency for the department over which that minister presides. A minister sitting in the House of Lords, by reason of the comparative shortness of its sittings, has almost his whole time available for the conduct of the affairs of his department. I think that is a countervailing advantage which may, to some extent, be set off against the inconvenience of exclusion from the House of Commons. For that reason, among many others, I think that if the Lords continue to produce among their number men of capacity and of business habits, they will continue, as at present, to have their fair share in the executive business of the State.

Now, gentlemen, it would be mere affectation to deny that the proceedings in the Upper House of Parliament are observed with great watchfulness—I may even say with some jealousy—by the public at large. I do not complain of that, and I do not think any reasonable man interested on behalf of the House of Lords will be inclined to complain of it. Every office is a public trust. A public trust involves responsibility. Peers, as such, have no constituencies; and it is quite right, therefore, that those who are not directly responsible to any individual constituency should be made to feel, even more than the members of the House of Commons, that indirect responsibility to the community at large which all men owe who hold a situation of trust and power. No doubt the powers vested in the House of Lords are large, and are such as, if exercised to the full extent of the law, might seriously embarrass the working of our Government. But ours is not a parchment constitution. It is founded not merely upon Acts of Parliament, but upon precedent, upon practice, and upon custom; and the custom of our day has established it as a rule which has almost the force of law—that although the peers have undoubtedly the right and the duty to reject any measure which they may consider to be injurious to the public interest, still if that measure is sent up to them again and again, in such a manner and after such a lapse of time as to show such deliberate and matured

opinion of the House of Commons and its constituents in its favour, then they are bound to waive their individual opinion, and to give effect to that which they can no longer doubt is the will of the country at large. In mere technical words, words though the law gives them no absolute veto, yet the practice of our age gives them a suspensory veto. It is only by means of compromises and concessions that a mixed Government like ours can be worked; and, speaking for my own part, I say that if the rights of the House are exercised in that spirit of moderation and of good sense, I for one have no fear that those powers will be seriously attacked.

It is often said that the House of Lords is not a representative body. Well, I demur to that doctrine. It is not an elective body, but a legislative assembly may be representative without being elective. I believe that the four or five hundred members who compose the House of Lords do represent the upper and educated class of society in the same sense in which a jury is held to represent the opinion of the class from which it is taken. They are, in a great majority of cases, men who have been carefully educated and trained; they are, in almost all cases, men who are in circumstances of pecuniary independence—who have nothing to ask of the Minister; and that is a qualification, I may say in passing, not generally found in continental assemblies. They are a numerous body, and that is important in more ways than one. Among so large a number, according to the ordinary law of chance, it is almost a matter of certainty that there will be, in every generation, a sufficient number of men competent to carry on the duties which devolve upon the body at large. And whereas in a small and close body the corporate spirit—the *esprit de corps*—may be so strong that virtually only one opinion is there represented, in an assembly so numerous as the House of Lords there is a moral certainty that you will find a variety of temperament, of opinion, and of training.

Gentlemen, I might say more, but it is difficult to speak upon such a subject without going into matters which might

perhaps be considered as bearing too much upon politics to be admitted here. If there is any interest which in the House of Lords may appear to be inadequately represented, it is, perhaps, the mercantile and manufacturing interests. But even that is so rather, I think, in appearance than in reality. Even Manchester owes something to that Duke of Bridgewater who has left his name connected with the greatest engineering work of his day. Lord Overstone will be accepted as no unfit or inadequate representative of the mercantile community; and I need not tell you that there are many others who, in this and adjoining counties, though not directly concerned in mercantile or manufacturing enterprise, have, notwithstanding, as landowners, their interests—their personal and peculiar interests—as closely and as intimately bound up with the prosperity of manufactures and of commerce as if they themselves were manufacturers and merchants.

Well, gentlemen, I have kept you longer than I meant in what is perhaps only a toast of routine. Only this one word more. I believe that the future destiny of the House of Lords depends, as that of all other men depends, very much more upon what they do than upon what any other man may do or say for them. If by negligence, by non-attendance, by disgust at matters not going on as they like, they abnegate their functions, they will lose their power, and in that case it will be their own fault. If, on the other hand—which I apprehend is more likely to be the case—they continue steadily, patiently, laboriously in the discharge of the duties which devolve upon them by the Constitution—not, on the one hand, proudly persisting in an unpopular and useless resistance to what the public really requires, nor, on the other hand, grasping at that temporary popularity which is obtained by the surrender of popular interests, but looking only to the real and substantial power and interest of the nation—then, whether the public agrees or disagrees with them upon any particular question, they will be respected. They will retain confidence, and in a constitutional country confidence is power.

VIII

CULTIVATION OF ART

PRESTON: SEPTEMBER 10, 1863

[THE speaker first stated details as to the Preston School of Art.]

I now come to the much larger subject of that art for the promotion of which this Preston School exists. How far is art cultivated in this country? How far ought it to be a subject of national concern? As to the last question, I think few of us will feel any doubt as to the answer which should be given. In early and rude states of society there is little leisure to attend to any wants except those which make themselves first and most imperatively felt—the want of safety and subsistence. While nations, in the infancy of their existence, are struggling against hunger—supplying day by day the requirements of the present moment, unable even to make provision for the future, uncertain whether the abundance of one season will not be succeeded by the famine of the next, fearing lest even that which they can lay by should be a temptation to rival races as poorly provided and as rude as themselves—there is no thought of any more refined wants than those of the animal nature. Men build only for shelter and defence. If they adorn anything, they adorn their persons and their weapons. If they admire anything, it is bodily courage and strength.

With a higher state of organisation, with an increased division of labour, there arises in all countries a class which does not engage in bodily toil. Of such a class war is generally the earliest employment; but war, though an occasional, cannot be a constant pursuit. Then arises, with

leisure, that inevitable discontent which is the condition, and in some sense the cause, of progress. Men have time to look about them; they observe; they reflect; they discuss; the reasoning powers are exercised; the imagination begins to act; they desire not merely to live securely, but to understand what lies round them, and to gratify that love of beauty which, whether we call it innate or not, appears to be universal among mankind, however eccentric to cultivated tastes some of its manifestations may appear.

There may be a bad and barbarous art, as there may be a rude and primitive literature; but no nation has long existed in a condition tolerably settled and secure, that has not had something which is meant for literature, and something which is intended for art. There appears to be a general, though not an invariable, progress. At first, vastness is most appreciated in architecture, gaudy colouring as a means of decoration. The rules of construction are few and simple. Those who seek to produce something more admirable than their neighbours seek to excel them in costliness, in the use of rare material, and in the gigantic proportions of their work. By-and-by it is felt that these things are not all; that a building may be vast, and yet not beautiful; decorations rich and costly, yet not graceful. And then comes the higher and later development of taste—that which looks beyond the material to the form, and which recognises, though perhaps unconsciously, the existence of general laws of beauty. And let this be observed: it is precisely when the feeling for art has reached this stage that art is able to become really popular; that it ceases to be confined to a few, and becomes the property and the possession of an entire nation.

An example will best explain what I mean. Ornaments of gold and silver derive their chief value from the scarcity of the material of which they are made. They are costly; we know them to be costly. We associate them, therefore, with ideas of luxury and splendour. If the discovery of new mines rendered them common, they would lose half their value in

our eyes. But an article of ordinary domestic use, such as is found in the remains of Roman or Greek houses, or a common cast from some celebrated statue, may have cost very little; it may be capable of indefinite multiplication at a very low price. And yet, if the proportions and the design be such as we approve, the commonness of the thing will not prevent its being valued by men of taste. Take colouring: it is not the rarest and the most expensive dyes, it is the happy combination of colours that gives beauty to our carpets or to the paper on our walls. Take furniture: it would not be difficult to show specimens which, for their splendour, are thought fit to be placed in the houses of millionaires, and to put side by side with them others of very ordinary material; and yet every man whose judgment in art has been formed will condemn the first as heavy and ungraceful, and will look with pleasure at the symmetry and proportion of the last. Take architecture: you may look, unfortunately, in every English town or county at some building, public or private, of great pretensions, lavishly adorned, to raise which estates have been sold or ratepayers heavily taxed; and yet an elevation of some comparatively humble dwelling, raised at not one hundredth part of the cost, will at once strike the eye as conforming to those rules of beauty from which the more sumptuous edifice departs.

What is the result of all this? Why, that art ought not to be, cannot be, the mere plaything of luxury or the slave of wealth. If it were so, I for one should care very little about it. I hardly understand a man of sense and feeling setting great store on pleasures which cannot be shared by the great bulk, at least, of educated men. We value art, we honour it, we seek to promote it, because it is in its nature universal—popular, in the true sense; because, like all sources of enjoyment which are intellectual, not material, it belongs to all those, and to those only, who have within themselves the power to appreciate it—who are students and scholars, not merely purchasers and patrons.

Do not let me be misunderstood in this. All honour to

those (and in this town, in Lancashire, and in England generally, you have many such) who, having wealth at command, employ it in the judicious patronage of living art. I sometimes hear it said, with a sneer, of such persons, that they do what they are doing rather in a spirit of ostentation than from a genuine feeling for the cause. I do not believe it is true; but I do not greatly care whether it be true or not. Honour, I say, to those whose ostentation, if it be such, takes a form so useful to the community—so useful to thousands who may never, perhaps, see the gallery of the patron, but whom the picture reaches in the form of an engraving, and who profit by the diffusion of a taste for art. Let us secure the thought, the work of the real artist, cost what it may: the task of reproducing that thought, and spreading it abroad among the people, will never want capable minds and ready hands. In this respect art has gone hand in hand with literature. The cheap print has kept pace with the cheap newspaper and the cheap book. Whoever writes, whoever paints, does it not for a select few, but for the entire nation.

And let me say this: that if to every civilised people art be necessary to adorn and embellish life, it is more than ever necessary in this age and country. The characteristic of our modern life is that, while comparatively secure and peaceable, it tends continually to become more organised, and therefore more monotonous. Labour is divided to a greater extent than formerly. Men in all classes (I speak of those 999 out of every 1,000 who have their living to get) take to one serious pursuit, and do that one thing during the greater part of their lives. That rule holds good of all classes, from the lawyer with his briefs to the operative who tends the loom. No one can doubt that the results of this system to society are good as a whole. But it may be a question whether it is well for the character of the individual man.

There is a certain monotony which creates a craving for excitement and pleasure. There is a certain narrowness induced by the constant absorption in one pursuit. To

satisfy that craving innocently—to counteract that narrowness—is no slight difficulty, and no unimportant object. Here it is that art may do much. Something also might be said of the compulsion that seems to be upon us to reside more and more in towns—to see less and less of those aspects of nature which exercise upon our minds an influence more important and more salutary than we are perhaps aware of; while for the most part the aspect of English towns is fitted to destroy rather than to create a right taste.

But there is besides these a more directly practical and industrial purpose to be served. We are now a mercantile and manufacturing, even more than an agricultural, community. It would be the idlest waste of time to speak of the importance of the manufacturing interest at a moment when its temporary collapse (temporary no reasonable man can doubt that it will be) has cast anxiety and gloom over the whole north of England. But for manufacturing success a certain training in art is indispensable. Coarse and cheap fabrics may indeed go into all the markets of the world, resting on their utility and cheapness as sole and sufficient recommendations. For the production of such we in England have immense natural and acquired advantages. But for the more refined and not less useful fabrics it is not enough to have good material and honest workmanship; there must be something to please the educated eye and taste. And it is well known that, as regards these, English taste has, until of late years, been a byword throughout the Continent. It is quite otherwise now.

M. Chevalier, the celebrated French economist, in his report on the Exhibition of 1862, says: 'The upward movement is visible, above all, among the English. The whole world has been struck with the progress which they have made since the last Exhibition in designs for stuffs and in the distribution of colours, as also in carving, sculpture, and articles of furniture.' And he dwells with a natural and patriotic alarm on what he calls 'the pre-eminence of France in the domain of taste' receiving a shock from the newly-

created competition of English workmen. Another of the French jurors says on the same subject: 'It is impossible to ignore the fact that a serious struggle awaits France from this quarter;' with more to the same effect. And a third adds: 'It is our duty to remind our workmen that defeat is possible—that it may be even foreseen at no distant date. English industry has, during the last ten years, made amazing progress and we may soon be left behind.'

It is worth notice that each of these gentlemen, writing separately, ascribes the advance of the last ten years, which they cannot deny, mainly to the creation of these Schools of Design, and to the spreading by them of a kind of knowledge which previously did not exist. The increase of these schools has been great and rapid. Ninety are now established and working. Upwards of 70,000 pupils are reported to Government as receiving instruction in art. The general proficiency is undoubtedly on the increase. By the report published in May last, it appears that the first-class prizes for 1862 are 3,778, against 2,785 in 1860, being an increase of 1,000 in two years; the local medals are 1,068 against 861; and the national medallion prizes, 89 against 76. The standard is said to remain the same, and the increase is therefore a measure of the progress made.

There are persons who say, 'There is a point of refinement which is reached in some other countries to which you will never bring the English taste.' I do not believe that. I see no reason why it should be true, and I see many reasons that make me think it improbable. There is no want of a love of beauty in the English mind. The English eye is more sensitive to dirt, to disorder, to whatever indicates negligence and slovenliness, than that of any people in Europe except the Dutch. Our gardens excel those of any other nation. There is not much to say for our architecture; but that is rather due to a want of good models from which to copy. The eye can only see what it has been trained to observe.

No doubt wide distinctions of national character do exist;

and if we had tried this experiment before on a large scale, and had failed, there might be some reason for despondency. But it never has been tried. Artistic culture does not come by nature; and unless it did, there was nothing by which it could possibly reach the mass of English society. I have never heard that English gentlemen were inferior to foreigners, either in love for art or in capacity for appreciating it. And what one class can do, with equal opportunities any other class can do. At any rate, I say, let us continue to try.

It is too early to boast, but it is also too early to give it up. We now import skilled designers from France. But there was a time when no English school of painting existed, and when a gentleman imported his pictures as necessarily as he imported his wine. We know how little that is the case now. So again, fifty years ago, architecture as an art was almost extinct in England. Look at most buildings of the last century, especially the latter part of it, and you cannot fail to be struck by the want, not so much of taste as of all attempt at taste. In our towns the very idea of ornament seemed to be discarded; and the utmost ambition of the architect was to produce, at a moderate cost, a box of bricks in which a family might conveniently reside. But within the last forty years a great revival has taken place. Public buildings and houses on a large scale are, for the most part, now such as you can look at not only without offence, but with real enjoyment. I wish I could say the same of smaller buildings, of our suburban villas, our cotton-mills, our rows of cottages. The best that can be said of these, for the most part, is that, the construction being generally on a par with the design, they are not likely long to encumber the earth.

But even here there are exceptions to the general rule of deformity. Near Wigan, if I may select one instance, I saw, the other day, a new mill of vast extent rising (and I was glad to see it on other than artistic grounds), which is not, as usual, an eyesore, but a pleasure to the eye to rest on—so well has architectural effect been studied in its construction. I suspect, if any manufacturer had indulged in

such a taste at the beginning of this century, he would have found trouble in proving his sanity among his neighbours in business. At the present day the instance I mention, though still rare, is not unique. In Manchester, in Liverpool, in the City of London, there are buildings destined for business purposes—banks, insurance offices, warehouses, and the like—which may fairly compete, for splendour and purity of design, with similar works in any part of the world.

We have, then, the fact patent to observation, that in every branch of fine art—in architecture, in painting, in decorative skill—England, during the present generation, has made great and rapid progress. I think, therefore, that in promoting these Schools of Design, intended for the better culture of art, we are supplying a real want, representing a real tendency of our time; and in that belief I now undertake with pleasure the duty that has brought us here—that of giving away the prizes to the successful competitors. May they go on as they have begun; may they remember that early victories are not necessarily a guarantee for continued success! No step can be gained without effort; and he, I believe, is no true artist to whom that effort is not a pleasure. And let those who have been unlucky in the present competition recollect that the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; and look forward with unabated confidence to future trials, certain that no considerable position was ever yet attained in any department of human labour without the painful but necessary experience of occasional failure.

IX

SECONDARY EDUCATION — OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS — NEED FOR ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE

MANCHESTER: JANUARY 6, 1864

HAVING finished the main business of the day, you will allow me to address to you a few words as to the general purpose and working of these so-called local examinations. It is easy, I think, to explain the reason why it was thought expedient that examinations of this kind should be held. Great efforts, as we all know, have been and are being made for the improvement and extension of school-teaching in the lower and labouring classes. Large sums are voted, private liberality is stimulated and rewarded by State grants, the clergy, the landowners, the manufacturing employers are incessantly called upon to assist; and though the quality of the teaching given may not be all that we could desire, and though, in great towns especially, large sections of the people still remain unprovided for, yet, on the whole, comparing the present with the past, and ourselves with foreigners, we are entitled to say that England, which thirty years ago was far behind continental Europe in educational matters, now holds her own with any country in the world. For the higher and wealthier classes, again, the great public schools and the old collegiate foundations supply means of suitable culture.

But between the highest and the lowest, between those who send their sons to Eton, Harrow, or Rugby, and those whose children attend the village school, there is a class numerically far larger than the highest, and both politically and socially not less important than the labouring masses. The want of good schools for the sons of farmers, yeomen,

tradesmen, clerks—of men having incomes, say from 100*l.* to 500*l.* a year (though any such definition is necessarily both imperfect and inaccurate); the want, in short, of what are known as good middle-class schools is an evil which has been long understood and felt, though less felt, perhaps, than it ought to be by those whom it chiefly affects. With the exception of a few grammar schools here and there, the business has been left to private enterprise. Nothing better, if only the buyer were always qualified to judge of the value of the article in which he invests. But that is not the case.

Many fathers have not the leisure or the will to investigate very carefully the qualifications of the schoolmaster. Those who have made their way in the world—and happily they are a class more numerous in England than anywhere else, except perhaps the colonies—naturally wish their children to have a better education than they had themselves. They are willing to give a good price, but they are liable to be duped by any confident pretender who may get hold of them. They want some test by which to know a good school from a bad one, and that test is supplied by these examinations. I do not hesitate to say that during the six years of their existence they have done more to expose bad schools and to bring good ones into notice than any other machinery that could be devised for the purpose. They have put, not the lads, but the masters, on their trial. And it is not easy to see, in our state of society, by what other agency that purpose could have been accomplished. Government inspection is very well for schools which get help from the State, and great national foundations, such as the universities and public schools, may from time to time be subjected to the supervision, cautiously and moderately exercised, of Parliament and of the executive. But we should never endure in England to have Government interfering with private teaching establishments, and I say, for one, we ought not to endure it.

The plan that has been adopted is open to no such objection. It is perfectly voluntary; no school need send up

candidates unless the master chooses. It implies no dependence, and leaves the teaching absolutely free. It simply marks out for honour and distinction those schools in which the most accurate and effective teaching is given; for I believe it will be found in these, as in all such trials where they are properly managed, that success depends far less on the amount which is supposed to be known than on the thoroughness of the knowledge attained. It is in this respect that our university system is thoroughly sound and good. There will always be disputes as to which are the fittest subjects for boys and young men to study, for the field is vast, time short, and life busy; but I think that there can be no dispute as to the soundness of the rule which every Oxford or Cambridge examiner lays down—to take no account of, to ignore and pass over altogether, every answer which is not accurate and precise as far as it goes. That is, I think, the very best part of the mental training which university men get in early life. To know what it is that you know, and where your knowledge ends; to use the plainest and best English word which conveys your meaning, neither more nor less; to avoid vague and general terms, which carry with them no definite idea (especially if they sound well, and remind one of what is called fine writing), these are the marks by which we instinctively distinguish an educated from a half-educated man, whether in his writing or in his speech. And why? Because these are the signs of a man having mastered his subject—of his having trained himself to think and to express his thoughts; and when a man has done that he is sure to be worth hearing.

The misfortune is, that we so often come across people who can find words about anything and everything, words which, in the works of those from whom they picked them up, had a very real and definite significance, but which are repeated with only a half understanding of what they imply. And I think that habit of talking and thinking at second-hand is one which our customs of the present day necessarily encourage. Nobody doubts but that there is a vast amount

of mental activity in English society. Everything is written about, everything is discussed. Conversation and reading spread themselves over a range of topics which would have utterly astonished and perplexed our forefathers. The first-class newspapers are probably read, collectively, by more than half a million of persons. I speak of those who read them habitually, and with an intelligent interest. Now, I do not say, as is sometimes alleged, that that is a state of things unfavourable to original thought. Original thinkers are rare in every time, and they can take care of themselves. However thick the crowd may be, there is always room for those who can pass over other men's heads. And I do not complain of the great mass of half knowledge and superficial knowledge that is created. Better that than lethargy and stagnation. But, undoubtedly, our intellectual danger in the present day lies, not on the side of a culture too narrow and exclusive, as formerly, but rather on that of spreading our attention over a hundred subjects, instead of concentrating it on a few. Perhaps you may think that in saying all this I have got away from the question of schools, but it is all a part of my case. As the boy is, so is the man. Accuracy, thoroughness, rather than variety and superficiality, is the point to be insisted upon, and that is precisely what a good system of examination tends to develop.

It has been well said that there is no test of knowledge like the pen. One may have strong opinions—as the phrase goes—on some question, and imagine that one understands it thoroughly; but it is quite surprising, when one sits down to write about it, how the consciousness of imperfect, or uncertain, or perhaps wholly deficient information comes upon one, and how much there is to be supplied of which one never should have felt the want in mere conversation. It is a commonplace to quote Bacon's saying, how 'reading makes a full man, speech a ready man, writing an exact man;' but though a commonplace, it is one of those sayings which recurs to one's mind, because they are so exactly and universally true. Do not fancy that this question of accuracy is

an unimportant one. I doubt if any man ever made himself eminent in any line of business, except perhaps as a popular speaker or preacher, who was habitually careless in his habits of thought. The habit of verifying facts before we accept them, with that which necessarily follows upon it, the habit of suspending the judgment where facts are not certainly or precisely known, and utterly distrusting the first vague impressions which we form, is not very common even among the educated classes; and upon that habit, perhaps, more than we think both of our social comfort and political well-being depends. Where any wild report finds easy credence - where people rush to conclusions from hearing one side of a story without waiting to hear the other—where there is general impatience to believe or disbelieve without sufficient grounds for either—there one security is wanting both against political exaggeration and individual injustice.

I look on the cultivation of what I may call our judging faculties as one of the very first duties which civilisation imposes on the members of a community. For though we may not all be magistrates, or politicians, or jurymen, we all have to sit in judgment on one another—it is the necessary condition of social life—and to weigh doubtful evidence in cases which concern ourselves. Now, that power of judgment is not born in us. It has to do, I admit, with the moral as well as the intellectual nature, and depends on temperament to some extent. But it is an intellectual quality also; and, as such, the result of experience and mental training. The first condition is, to get clearly and exactly the facts before you—the next, to use the reasoning faculties upon them. Now, it is in enabling men to do these things that school teaching is mainly useful. Whether the form adopted be mathematical or classical—the study of figures and symbols or the study of language—the intention is the same. Questions, properly put, will discover whether memory and attention have been exercised in supplying the materials for answers, and whether those materials have been turned to account; whether what has been read has been digested also.

And here let me say that I think the duty of an examiner is to give the least possible prominence to—he cannot exclude altogether—such questions as test the mere mechanical power of recollecting only, without any independent action of the answerer's mind. You do not want to know what a boy has learnt by rote; you want to see what use he can make of it. That test is equally applied whether a lad is set to show his knowledge of a foreign language or to work a mathematical problem. But it is not applied when the thing he is required to do is to answer a variety of queries as to facts and dates, not always in themselves important, which may be, and often are, got up for the occasion, and forgotten directly after. That kind of cramming—for it is nothing else—has, no doubt, the merit of saving trouble to the teacher, but it is mental labour and training of the lowest kind, and is more apt than anything else to create a disgust to reading in after life. I notice that all the more, because some reference is made to the subject in the last Oxford report on these examinations. I find the examiners say of the theological teaching, 'By far the most general defect was the almost entire absence of any intelligent knowledge' of the matters which had been verbally learnt. They go on, 'Words which boys use or hear every Sunday, convey either no meaning to their minds, or a wrong one.' Of the mathematical part they say that 'It is generally sufficient in quantity, but there is a want of intelligence displayed wherever the text is not reproduced *verbatim*.' In an earlier report they speak of candidates who have 'a verbal acquaintance with the rules of grammar, but utterly fail in their application.' And they end with a sentence which conveys the whole moral of what I have been trying to urge upon you: 'More marks would be gained, and the process would be more beneficial to the candidates, were they to confine their reading within narrower limits, selecting one or more of the trial subjects, and learning them thoroughly, instead of endeavouring to obtain a less acquaintance with the whole.'

Now I am glad to cite these passages, partly for their own

value, partly, also, because they answer an objection which I have often heard—that examinations promote cramming—meaning by that word a temporary pretence of knowledge, which is got up to serve a special purpose, and useless in all other respects. Not only do I believe that not to be the truth, but I believe it to be the very opposite of the truth. Cramming implies just that show and parade of things superficially acquired which may impose upon parents who have forgotten their own early teaching; but which will never impose on an examiner who understands his business. The fault, or the tendency to the fault, is in the school; the detection of it is the duty of the examiner who tests the school.

There is one more word I have to say on a matter connected with this. Many sensible people are afraid that, by the increased stimulus of a wider competition, we shall tempt young boys to hurt their health by over-reading. That is a reasonable apprehension, but it admits of an answer. Overwork is seldom good work. We used to say, when I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, that anybody who had it in him to become a senior wrangler might become one—that is, might attain the highest distinction in one kind which the University can give—by reading steadily six hours a day. I believe that was true, and I hold it certain that those, whether boys or men, who hurt their health by over-study are not those who labour steadily or at a moderate pace, but those who neglect healthy exercises and care in other respects, and more especially those who, having been idle for the greater part of their time, try and make up lost ground by a desperate push at the last. Now, as to the success which these examinations have met with. It has been stated in the report that after the first year (1858) the number of candidates fell off, and has only just reached its original level. The juniors were 750 in 1858, 573 in 1860, and 762 in the past year. Does that imply failure? I think not. It shows that a great many came up, not in the least knowing what to expect, and having had some unpleasant experiences, in the

first year, did not care to try again. Out of the first 750 only 280 passed, and no wonder there should have been some reluctance to incur a second such exposure. But the effect has been good. For of the 762 who went up last year, 487 have passed, being a proportion of about 64 per cent., whereas the proportion in 1858 was only 38 per cent. (I take the returns of the junior candidates only, in order not to multiply figures, but the others would give a generally similar result.) You cannot have a better measure of the improvement in the art of teaching which these yearly comparisons between school and school have created; and when one considers that no class of men, however excellent, like to have their pretensions criticised and their shortcomings made public, least of all those who exercise a kind of authority on a small scale, it seems to me singular, and creditable to the schoolmasters as a body, that so little opposition has been made in any quarter to the whole scheme. I shall detain you no further; but only mention, before I sit down, that Manchester holds in these examinations, as might be expected from the character of its people, a place considerably higher than the average. You sent up last year 157 candidates in all, out of 1,029 from all parts of England; that is, in round numbers, more than one-seventh of the whole; and if I assume that for this purpose Manchester represents all the neighbouring towns, with a population of perhaps a million altogether (Liverpool and Leeds are both rival centres), you will have one-seventh the total number of students from one-twentieth of the total population. So much for the number examined; in point of success you stand a little, though only a little, above the average, having passed 68 per cent. as compared with a general average of 64 per cent. I am justified, therefore, in affirming that on your part a certain superiority exists. But while I say that, I must add also that, as a Lancashire man, I shall not be satisfied, and I think you ought not to be satisfied, until we make it more marked and more decisive. It rests with you to accomplish that: the power is there, the will I am certain is not

wanting: all that is needed is to keep alive a strong and healthy public interest in the matter; and that such interest exists, your presence here, the numbers that have met in this room to-day, the character of this audience, and the increasing popularity of these yearly gatherings, are a sufficient and satisfactory proof.

X

APPLICATION AND USES OF THE STATISTICAL METHOD

Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science—Birmingham: September 1865

In opening the Section of Statistics and Political Economy, I need not trouble you with more than a few introductory remarks. It has been questioned how far such subjects ought to form part of the business of a strictly scientific association, and I do not think the question unreasonable, for it must be admitted that while even political economy itself, in its present state, is rather a collection of practical maxims, supported by reason and tested by experience, than a science in the same sense as astronomy or optics are entitled to that name, the topics to which the statistical method is applicable are infinitely various, and have little in common, except this one characteristic, that in every case we appeal either to the numerical tests of accuracy, to figures, or else to fixed and recognised rules, which are assumed to have the same kind of certainty as prevails in physical science. How far that assumption holds good in practice must depend on the judgment both of those who read papers and of those who comment upon them.

The truth is, in my opinion, that our functions here are rather to suggest and stimulate than to originate thought. Discussion, no doubt, we shall have, and in discussion new ideas are constantly generated, and new lights thrown upon previously unfamiliar topics. But it is not in crowded meetings, it is not in debating speeches that any profound

and original investigation can be carried on. Meetings like ours answer two purposes apart from that of social enjoyment. One of those is the diffusion, not the origination, but the diffusion of ideas. Books and newspapers and reviews, no doubt, are the main agents for doing that work. Still it is, I think, indisputable that, as seeing is proverbially more impressive than hearing, so what we hear orally delivered makes upon us a stronger impression than that which lies on a printed page, on which our attention may or may not dwell. The other is the stimulus given to inquiry by the mere fact of investigations of this kind, or the result of them, being brought prominently and conspicuously before the public. Men go home with their heads full of subjects on which they, perhaps, never thought seriously before. And since, as I believe, nothing once known is ever really forgotten—since an idea which has once found lodgment in the mind, though its presence there may long have been barren, and though we ourselves may be unconscious of it, will often spring up into life after a long interval—it is difficult to determine what crop may not grow, sooner or later, out of the seed thus cast apparently at random.

And now let me say a word as to the right application of the statistical method. To use figures rightly, assuming that they are accurate in themselves, is not as easy a matter as it is apt to appear. There are various fallacies into which unpractised statisticians fall, one or two of which may be worth noting. One, perhaps the commonest, arises from the use of too narrow a basis for calculation. To explain my meaning: given a certain class of men between certain ages, as soldiers, agricultural labourers, artisans, and the like, the aggregate length of life among 10,000, or even among 1,000, of those will be practically a fixed quantity; you can determine it beforehand. But the length of any single life is, of course, uncertain; and if so few as 10, 20, or even 100 lives be taken, the element of chance, or what we call chance, is not sufficiently excluded; and a single exceptional case affects the general result. Another error, less easy to detect, arises from

not taking into account all the causes which affect the result. Thus, supposing that the question is the effect produced by the reduction of a tax in increasing the consumption of the article taxed, it is a natural but a very obvious mistake to argue—*post hoc ergo propter hoc*—to speak of that augmented consumption as arising solely from the reduction of duty which preceded it, ignoring other causes—such as general prosperity and consequent augmentation of the consuming power, cheapening of means of transport, or lowering of the actual cost of production by mechanical improvements or otherwise of the article consumed. Or, to take an illustration from a different class of subjects, suppose it is desired to ascertain the average mortality of a certain class, that for this purpose we take the mortality in that class during a certain number of years, and that during one of those years an epidemic of a destructive character has prevailed. You, of course, strike out that year from the series as unduly affecting the average. But if you stop there, your calculation is again vitiated, though in a different manner. For it will almost always happen that an epidemic sweeps away a larger proportion of unhealthy than of healthy lives; and so the years succeeding, their mortality having been, so to speak, anticipated, are above the true average in point of health, and do not form a fair basis for a permanent calculation.

Another variety of the same error, identical in principle, is where effect and cause are confounded. For instance, I have heard a sanitarist argue, with great general truth, in favour of model lodgings in towns, and support his argument by pointing out the diminished ratio of mortality in them as compared with the same class outside. No one could dispute the general conclusion. But in fairness it should have been taken into consideration, as a qualifying proposition, that model lodgings, by their reputation for superior cleanliness and healthiness, attract not the average, but the best men, in point of regular and orderly habits, of the class for whom they are designed—that is, those whose chances of life are the best, independent of the manner in which they are

lodged. Hence involuntary exaggeration arises, by which a good cause can only suffer.

A third source of error, perhaps less material, but still worth notice, is that of confounding in one class facts not identical. For instance, the average death-rate in England is easily ascertained ; but if you wish to apply that practically to a particular place or class, you must not take the figures as they stand. The death-rate of towns is not that of rural districts—the mortality of infants greatly exceeds that of adults ; the term of life is shorter in the labouring than in the well-to-do classes. Age, class, locality, must be separately determined before you can arrive at an even approximately accurate conclusion. The figures which serve for all collectively, precisely because they do so serve, are illusory if applied to any one of these in particular. I mention such possible mistakes in order to show how utterly wide of the truth is that idea that to work by and with statistical calculations is a merely mechanical function needing no ability beyond that of a careful clerk. They require common sense and vigilance against errors, like every other method of inquiry. Figures do not, indeed, deceive you ; but if you put them to a use they were not meant for, they will let you deceive yourself.

I suppose it is hardly necessary to remind you of the uses of the statistical method as applied to national affairs. If a man in private life finds his money going too fast and wants to retrench, the first thing he does is to say, 'I must keep accounts.' So individuals keep diaries of particular matters in which they are interested, not trusting to vague recollection, but setting down their notes day by day. Every person of observant habits, or engaged in any pursuit which requires accuracy, is in some sense a statistician. And it is hardly possible to overrate the value of figures, partly as checking that universal tendency to exaggerate, not wilful, but a kind of mental illusion, which operates wherever we are deeply interested, partly as giving definiteness and precision to ideas which would otherwise remain floating in our minds in a

vague and therefore comparatively useless form. For instance, to say generally that a given trade or employment—that of a grinder, or of a soldier in the tropics—is unhealthy conveys a very faint impression, and affects our feelings but slightly. But put it in this way, that the average length of life in some occupations is shorter by ten or fifteen years than that of an ordinary labourer; and the man himself, however ignorant or thoughtless he may be, is able clearly to realise the sacrifice he is making in going into that business.

So with regard to questions of drainage, of ventilation, of food, of the use or abuse of strong drinks, it is the statistical test employed on a large scale which alone can be conclusive. I say on a large scale, for it is of the very essence of statistical inquiry that by dealing with masses it eliminates individual peculiarities. We reason back from the mass to the individual; the subject of the statistician, his typical or representative man, is the average man of many thousands. We are familiar with the effect on public health of the establishment of sanitary statistics. Let me point out one or two instances in which figures form part, and a very curious part, of the doings of our national life. Take the Post Office returns, showing increase of correspondence as compared with the past, and the difference which exists in the amount of letter-writing between one part of the country and another—say between the population of Ireland and that of London. Take the Registrar-General's returns of marriages, and note how the number of these relatively to the population rises and falls as the material condition of the masses is for the time better or worse. Take the annual publications of the Customs and Excise departments. Take our census abstracts of the occupations of the people. Take our criminal statistics—a comparatively new department, and one probably still admitting of much improvement. You may read in these collectively the social and economical history of the age in which we live. And note everywhere the absence of mere chance. We speak of chance—it is a word which we must use for convenience sake—but we really mean by it not that

the result discussed is in itself uncertain, but that some or all of the determining causes of such result are to us unknown. We imply not the absence of a law, but inevitable ignorance, on our part, of what the law is. When you find uniformity, or something which closely approximates to uniformity, in such matters as the number of letters yearly posted without addresses, in the number of widows and widowers who remarry, or in the number of detected offences of the same nature committed within the year, it is impossible not to be impressed, however trifling may be the illustration of them, with the permanence and steadiness of the laws which regulate our existence.

Now, is there any use in knowing that? I think there is. In the first place, no knowledge which bears upon human life is useless, even though we do not at the moment see the practical application to which we can put it. A discovery always turns to account in some way. The most important mechanical inventions owe their origin to purely mathematical theories, which the authors of them never dreamt of so applying. In the next place, it is only by observing men in masses, and with the aid of all such helps to accuracy as we can command, that we can fairly appreciate the influence of general causes, whether material or moral, national or individual. Take a town in which a thoroughly good system of drainage has been established, you want to learn what has been the effect of that system on health. Question each person or each family separately, you will, probably, get very conflicting and dubious testimony. But register the deaths and causes of death, compare them with what they were before, and with similar returns in other places, and the decrease will give you at once a measure of what has been effected.

And, lastly, of that large class of human evils which are reparable as well as preventable—evils affecting not life, but property, or affecting life as considered in its relation to property—there are very few to which the principle of insurance may not be applied. Now, what does insurance mean? It is

the opposite of gambling. The gambler, desiring to gain something which is not his, risks in return something of that which he actually possesses. The insurer, seeking to preserve what he has, submits to a certain small fixed deduction, and thereby precludes the occurrence of a much larger possible loss. The one purposely increases the hazards of life, the other purposely diminishes them. Now, if it be, as I believe it is, indisputable that a sense of security is one of the very first requisites, both for material improvement and mental development, whatever creates or strengthens that sense of security is an important element of human progress; and when a proprietor has guaranteed himself, according to the nature of his property, against fire, against shipwreck, against loss of stock by disease, or of crops by storms; still more when the man who lives by his industry has secured himself, not indeed against premature death, but against that which to such persons having families is the sharpest sting of premature death, the dread of leaving unprovided for those whose existence is bound up with his own, it is difficult to estimate by any test of results that can be shown on paper the amount of good which is practically effected; for the gain must be measured, not by the number of persons actually saved from distress, but by the infinitely greater number saved from the apprehension of distress, the fear being often as bad as the thing feared.

It is not easy to overrate the benefit which the practice of insurance has conferred, and will confer, on mankind. And why, in opening this Statistical Section, do I refer to it? Because it is a practice founded in its very nature on statistical inquiries, and which without such inquiries could not have existed.

I do not know that it would serve any useful purpose if I were now to anticipate the contents of the papers that may be read in this Section. They will be many, various, I hope interesting, and ought to lead to useful discussion. Let me only offer to those who take part in our discussions one or two suggestions. The first is, time runs fast. You can say all

you have got to say in very few words, if you will think it over beforehand. It is not abundance of matter, it is want of preparation, want of exact thought, that makes diffuseness. A man goes round and round his meaning when he is not perfectly clear what it is that he does mean. Again, we do not want preambles or perorations. We are not a school of rhetoric; and in addressing an educated audience a good deal may be taken for granted. Lastly, we only wish to get at the truth of things. All ideas are welcome; but mere verbal criticism is of no value to us.

XI

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE LORD RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Glasgow: April 1, 1869

It is with no common satisfaction, but at the same time with a sense of diffidence which I cannot shake off, and do not care either to deny or to conceal, that I take my place for the first time in this hall, among those by whom I have been raised to a post of honour on my part unsought and unsolicited, but on that very account doubly gratifying—not the less so, because just thirty-five years ago it fell to my father's lot to stand in this room and with powers very different from mine, but certainly not with more anxiety to exert them to the utmost in your service, to discharge the honourable function which devolves on me to-day.

Gentlemen, the Lord Rector of this University, be he who he may, looks back on a series of more than ordinarily illustrious predecessors, and cannot but feel honoured by the association, although but casual and temporary, of his name with theirs. It is something to be the successor, however unworthily, of Burke and Adam Smith, of Jeffrey, Mackintosh, and Brougham, of literary men such as Campbell and Lytton, of politicians like Palmerston and Peel. Rightly and wisely you have not confined the highest honour at your disposal within either local or professional limits. Rightly and wisely you have sought in your Lord Rectors for representative men, not literary men alone, nor men of science, nor politicians, nor lawyers, but each and all of these in their turn; sympathising with honest and strenuous effort in whatever branch of human exertion, and recognising that not literature exclu-

sively, nor exclusively science, but action directed to useful public objects, is the true end and purpose of that large and comprehensive training which it is your glory and your privilege to bestow.

Gentlemen, if I came here merely to indulge in the language of compliment, I might justly congratulate you on the patriotic munificence which has given to your ancient University a new and suitable home—on your four centuries of energetic and successful existence, dating from a time when Glasgow itself was little more than what we should now call a village—on your 1,200 students, your twenty-five professorial chairs—on the encouragement you afford to struggling and otherwise unaided talent—on the practical and varied character of the instruction given within these walls—on the long list of justly distinguished names, which, from the days of Buchanan to our own, has testified to the reality of the work you do, and illustrated the long series of your annals. But, gentlemen, it is not merely in the language of compliment that I wish to speak here. Words that lead to nothing are words wasted, and I should very ill repay your kindness if, on the only occasion when it will probably ever be my lot to meet you face to face, I should confine myself to expressions of gratitude, however sincerely felt, or to the language of vague and general panegyric, however much I might feel it to be deserved.

But there is one circumstance connected with the studies of this place that seems to me worthy of notice, because it may very well serve as a model to other and even greater communities than Glasgow: I mean the facilities supplied here to comparatively poor men to obtain the knowledge they seek for, and to compete on equal terms with the rich. Comparisons are notoriously invidious, but I believe it is not to be denied that in that respect you set us, the English, a good example, and one which we should do well to follow. No doubt, it is difficult to check undue expenditure in the case of young men whose means allow it; but if I were to say that both in our English schools and colleges more might

be done in that respect than is now done, I believe I should express an opinion which is very generally entertained among those whom it most directly concerns.

The combination of high attainments, persevering study, and limited means, is perhaps rarer in these islands, taking them as a whole, than in some other European countries. Yet, though learning needs some degree of leisure, there is no natural connection between learning and opulence. Scholarship has few greater names than that of Heine—yet Heine's existence, up to the age of thirty, was a constant struggle against poverty and privation, extending even to privation of the very means of subsistence. Simpson, the mathematician, a weaver's boy, was taken away from the humble school which he frequented from want of means to keep him there. The early struggles of our great painter Turner are well known to all who have followed the history of modern art in the pages of perhaps the most eloquent of living English writers. I do not multiply such examples—they are recorded in a hundred familiar works; but Scotland, and Glasgow especially, owes much to Buchanan; and never more strikingly than in Buchanan's case were the hardships and trials of a poor scholar's life displayed.

I might, indeed, carry the argument one step further and say that, as on the one hand mental energy is stunted and chilled by absolute penury, and the necessity of daily labour for daily bread, so on the other it is at least as likely to be repressed and destroyed by too abundant leisure, by the sense of security which belongs to an assured position, and by the thousand opportunities of easy enjoyment which wealth and leisure confer. I am not speaking here from theory. It is a matter of which illustrations occur in everyday existence. A middle station, equally removed from poverty and luxury, is that temperate zone of life (if I may so speak) in which mental development appears most to flourish. And the reason is simple. Work, as work, is not pleasant to any one at first. The taste for it is an acquired taste. It becomes, I believe, with some men one of the strongest tendencies of

their nature; the active brain requires its accustomed exercise as much as the active limbs need theirs. But the apprenticeship in 99 cases out of 100 is not pleasant, and perhaps there is no one respect in which the importance of early training is more deeply felt. Men may supply, well or ill, in later life, the want of acquired knowledge. They may accommodate their habits and thoughts to the necessities of a changed position; they may develop their natures in ways wholly unexpected; but one defect, I believe, can hardly ever be made good when the time of youth and early manhood is past—or, if made good, it can be so only as a result of painful and singular effort: the want, I mean, of habits of steady application and industry. They are mostly hard at any age to acquire, but there is this countervailing advantage about them, that once acquired they are not easily lost.

To the man who has made intellectual work the habit of his life, it is actual pain to be long unemployed. And be sure of this, that apart from all merely material and practical results (though I do not undervalue these), apart from these chances of rising in the world, of professional, or literary, or artistic distinction, of which we are perhaps all apt to think too much, because after all they are prizes which can fall to the lot of very few, and which those who have got them generally find worth less than they supposed—apart, I say, from accidental and adventitious results, there is no greater blessing for a man than to have acquired that healthy and happy instinct which leads him to take delight in his work for the work's sake; not slurring it over, not thinking how soon it will be done and got rid of, nor troubling himself greatly about what men will say of it when it is done (I suspect the best kind of workers think as little of that as Newton did when he hesitated whether to publish his discoveries or not), but putting his whole heart and mind into it, feeling that he is master of it, feeling that the thing which he has turned out—be it a legal argument, or a book, or a picture, or anything else—is conscientiously and honestly perfected to the best of his power.

Look at the matter only from the point of view of a man's personal happiness and welfare. What is the secret of the low amusements, the pleasure that is not pleasure, with which so many unhappy men contrive at once to waste and to shorten their lives? Why these things are, in 99 cases out of 100, merely the resources which they adopt to fill up vacant hours—to get rid of the intolerable weariness of unemployed existence—to kill the sense of apathy and *ennui* which is killing them. I am not trying or desiring to lay down for all men a single and uniform rule. There are some of us who seem born for action rather than for study, to whom abstract thought is repugnant, and who want always to be doing something, and to see the result of their labour before them. There are others whose natural turn is rather for thinking—for the exercise of the intellectual powers purely and simply—than for what are called, by a somewhat unmeaning distinction, the practical pursuits of life. Each temperament is probably better for having some admixture of the other, and the most complete and perfect organisation is that which combines both in the most equal proportions. But there is room in the world for both; and no greater folly can be committed by men than that of seeking to assimilate all individual character to one and the same type.

What I do say is that, whether the bent of a man's mind be study or business, whatever it is, let him throw himself heartily into it. I do not believe that an unemployed man, however amiable and otherwise irreproachable, ever was, or ever can be, really happy. Our work is our life; show me what you can do, and I will show you what you are. I have spoken of love of one's work as being the best preventive of merely low and vicious tastes. I will go further, and say I believe it is the best preservative against petty anxieties and the annoyances which arise out of indulged self-love. Men have thought before now that they could take refuge from trouble and vexation by sheltering themselves as it were in a world of their own. The experiment has often been tried, and always with one result. You cannot escape from anxiety

and labour, it is the destiny of humanity. You may avoid, indeed—some at least may to a great extent—taking part in the struggle of life, in the sharp and eager competition of an open profession, or the not less intense pursuit of some worthy object of study. But, by what seems to me a just and wholesome retribution, those who shrink from facing trouble find that trouble comes to them. The indolent man may contrive that he shall have less than his share of the world's work to do; but Nature, proportioning the instrument to the work, contrives that that little shall to him be much and hard. The man who has only himself to please finds, sooner or later, and probably sooner rather than later, that he has got a very hard master; and the more excusable weakness which shrinks from responsibility has its own punishment too; for where great interests are excluded little matters become great, and the same wear and tear of mind that might have been at least usefully and healthfully expended on the real business of life is often wasted on petty and imaginary vexations such as breed and multiply in the unoccupied brain.

There is yet another point of view from which I may press upon you the duty of industry. We sometimes hear it said, 'So-and-so is a man of fortune, who can afford to do nothing.' There are, of course, in a country like this, many thousands who do not need to earn their bread, or to increase their income, and who, perhaps, would be doing more harm than good if they embarked in any one of our already overcrowded professions. But there is a moral as well as a material aspect of these questions. No one can pass through his allotted term of years—no matter how plainly and simply—much less can he do so living as the wealthier classes live, without profiting by and consuming the fruits of other men's toil. All capital is accumulated labour. Of course, as far as human law and the regulations of society go, he may legitimately do that, rendering himself no labour in return, so long as he pays honestly for what he uses. But if the matter is to be dealt with *in foro conscientiæ*, I think a

scrupulous and high-minded man will always feel that to pass out of the world in the world's debt—to have consumed much and produced nothing, to have sat down, as it were, at the feast, and gone away without paying his reckoning—is not, to put it in the mildest way, a satisfactory transaction, however unimpeachable, and rightly so, it may be in the eye of economical and social law. You cannot very well lay down a formula for these things; it is often easier to ask for suitable occupation than to find it; but I think it is only a natural feeling for any one living at his ease to wish and strive that at least his country shall be no loser by him, that in some form, by some means, whether by speech or writing, or useful action, no matter how obscure, he shall replace to the public the expenditure of human labour that has been made upon him.

I know very well that with the best will in the world that feeling is not always easy to act upon. It is one thing to wish for a suitable sphere of duty, and another to be able to obtain one. There are many persons who, if not wholly idle, are yet unable to employ their faculties as they best might from the mere want of opportunity. I own that for such persons, assuming the fault not to rest with them, I have more compassion than for those who may be inclined to complain of the chances and struggles of professional life. Overwork—or what we may be inclined to consider as such—is bad enough; but it is probably a cause of less suffering in the aggregate than the consciousness of faculties unused and of energies which can find no vent.

But, gentlemen, I do not forget that in addressing you I am speaking to young men who, for the most part, have every external as well as internal inducement to lead an energetic and industrious life. To warn you, therefore, against mere indolence and neglect of opportunities is, I hope, superfluous. It is perhaps more to the purpose to ask you—at least to ask some of you—to recollect that overwork and overhaste (they are mostly the same thing) are as fatal as carelessness. We live in days of perhaps overstrained competition; and even

those who, so far as their personal feelings are concerned, would probably be satisfied with moderate success and a tranquil career, have, in most professions, hardly the choice. A rising lawyer cannot refuse briefs, a young surgeon or physician cannot decline practice. It is rarely, I fancy, in the power of any professional man to say, 'Up to such a limit I will work, and no farther.' It may be, for my own part I think it is, a misfortune that such should be the case—that, from the tendency of mankind to run after well-known names, one competitor in a profession should have more labour cast upon him than it is physically possible that he should attend to properly; while others, hardly, if at all, less capable, are standing by unemployed. But that is a result—I suppose an inevitable result—of open competition in a fair field, and we can only accept the laws of the game as we find them. Every man, therefore, who works with his brain must be prepared, in an open profession, to find, in the event of obtaining the success which he hopes for, that his bodily as well as mental powers will be taxed to the utmost. And if that possibility is realised, the question, all important for him, whether he will be able to hold his own or whether he will break down, will depend very much on the nature of his early training.

This is a subject on which there exists, I think, a good deal of prejudice and want of information. We have often heard of men crushed in youth by excessive mental strain. That such cases do occur I cannot in the face of evidence deny. But I believe that nine times out of ten they are the result of simple mismanagement. I doubt whether—speaking of young men, not of very young boys or children—honest work, steadily and regularly carried on, ever yet hurt anybody. The men who fail, and whose failure is pointed to as an illustration of the evils of over-study, are generally those who, rashly and foolishly, try to make up for past neglect by excessive temporary efforts; or else those who, absorbed in a single idea, and possibly ignorant of their own physical constitution, overlook the most ordinary requirements of bodily health. We used to say at Cambridge that any man who had

it in him to become a senior wrangler—that is, to take the highest honour known to the University, in the driest and most laborious branch of study—could do so by means of six or seven hours' reading in the twenty-four. Never to hurry, never except for some brief interval wholly to relax—to remember that neglected bodily health involves a weakened brain, and that it is possible to wear out in preparation the strength that should be reserved for the final effort—above all, to content one's self with the idea that one is doing one's best, and to await the event with as little of worry or anxiety as is compatible with the infirmity of nature—these are, I know, very simple and homely rules, but for being simple they are not less true; and though assuredly I do not say to any one that their observance is a guarantee for well-doing, I believe it will, to say the least, strike off from the list certain causes of otherwise inevitable failure. There is nothing new to be said in these matters. The *mens sana in corpore sano* is, as much now as it was 2,000 years ago, the most rational object of human wishes, and the most necessary condition of human success.

One word, and only one word more on this subject. I am convinced that as a rule we overrate—I think our tendency is enormously to overrate—the difference between men's powers for purposes of practical action. Of course these differences, after all deductions made, remain very great. But it is a matter of common observation in every profession, even the most intellectual—I think I have noticed it myself again and again—how often the very acutest intellects, for some reason or another, do not seem able to procure for their possessors the first place; while that place is often secured and kept by powers which seem, and which, intellectually considered, are, very greatly inferior. I believe that with no extraordinary quickness or brilliancy, but with perseverance, memory, accuracy, and that soundness of judgment which habits of patient inquiry confer—all qualities with which cultivation has more to do than nature—a man may rise very high in almost any department of human labour, and may pass by in the race many whom at school or at college, or possibly even

in later life, he regarded as hopelessly superior to himself. But of all these qualities, for every purpose, whether for action or speculation, I hold that one to be most valuable which it is almost entirely within our own power to acquire, and which nature unassisted never yet gave to any man. I mean a perfectly accurate habit of thought and expression. This is, as far as I can see, one of the very rarest acquirements. For it implies a good deal—carefulness, close attention to details, a certain power of memory, and the habit of distinguishing between things which are alike but not identical. I lay stress on this, because it seems to me the characteristically distinguishing mark of good and faulty teaching, of real and unreal learning. The best thing is to know your subject thoroughly—the next best to know nothing about it, and to be aware that you do know nothing—the worst is to know a little, and to know that little vaguely and confusedly.

Much is said in the present day for and against the system of competitive examinations. Like most other things they may have their defects, but this advantage they undoubtedly possess, that if well managed they are an effective check—a check, I think, more effective than any other—on the imposture of half knowledge. What a man can write out clearly, correctly, and briefly, without book or reference of any kind, that he undoubtedly knows, whatever else he may be ignorant of. For knowledge that falls short of that—knowledge that is vague, hazy, indistinct, uncertain—I, for one, profess no respect at all. And I believe that there never was a time nor a country where the influences of careful training were in that respect more needed. Men live in haste, write in haste—I was going to say think in haste, only that perhaps the word thinking is hardly applicable to that large number who, for the most part, purchase their daily allowance of thought ready-made. You find ten times more people now than ever before who can string together words with facility and with a general idea of their meaning, and who are ready with a theory of some kind about most matters. All that is very well as far as it goes; but it is one thing to be able to do

this, and quite another to know how to use words as they should be used, or really to have thought out the subject which you discuss.

For one of these purposes there is, I believe, no training better than the old classical training whose merits are now so much disputed. I do not deny that in English schools it has been carried to folly and pedantry. I doubt if any human being was ever the better or the wiser for being set to spin verses in a foreign and dead language. But, speaking of the rational use and not the abuse of classical literature, I think it has one great merit which is not easily to be found elsewhere. Even those who feel most strongly the incomparably wider range of modern thought will seldom deny that in precision, in conciseness, in dignity of style, and in verbal felicity, the great writers of ancient times have scarcely been equalled. It is suggestive to think how, under the influence of the mercantile principle, making books to be paid for in proportion not to their merits but to their length, and of the lifelong hurry which prevents us from studying condensation, such narratives as those of Cæsar and Tacitus would in modern hands have swelled into the dimensions of a modern historical composition, with the certain result that they would have occupied in men's memories no more enduring place than this last. Posterity preserves only what will pack into small compass. Jewels are handed down from age to age; less portable valuables tend to disappear. And do not fancy that this is a question of words alone. You cannot separate manner from matter. It is very seldom, I fancy, that clear thought and confused expression go together. A man can hardly give pains and time to the manner of saying a thing without the idea at least crossing his mind—what do I really mean? What story have I got to tell? What is the upshot of all this? I say, then, to those whose leisure will allow it, do not be led into the folly of treating classical study as a thing antiquated and useless. It is not what people used to think it, the only training; but it is a training, and not the worst. Only let it be taken up in earnest, or not at all. If a young

man has time and taste for Latin literature, so much, I think, the better. But a mere beginning of that—and still more a mere beginning both of Latin and Greek, which does not last long enough to give familiar acquaintance with either language, is sheer folly and waste of time. In this, as in everything else, a man should proportion his means to his ends, and not begin by laying the foundations of a house three times bigger than he can ever hope to finish. It is, I think, the neglect of this very obvious rule, it is the aiming at more than can possibly be accomplished in the time allowed, that more than anything else has tended to bring classical training into disrepute.

And what I say to you in regard to classics I would extend also to those other studies whose importance is being increasingly recognised in every modern system of education. I will not undertake to lay down a rule (I tell you frankly I do not see my way to do it) as to the proportion which the cultivation of science in its various forms should bear to that of literature and language. We are in a transition state as regards these matters, and it may last, for aught I can see, a long while yet. Much must depend, I conceive, on individual taste and temperament—something on the future destination of the student —something on the opportunities afforded, and the custom of the time and place. But this I think I do see clearly—and it adds to rather than lessens the intricacy of the whole question —that, looking on the one hand to the immense range of scientific knowledge, and on the other to the inevitable shortness of time allotted for learning, in the case of that great majority whose study here is a mere introduction to active life, it is idle to suppose that the actual amount of instruction acquired can bear any appreciable proportion to that which must remain untouched. To learn a little of everything under the sun is barely possible, and questionably useful, if it were possible. *Compendia, dispendia.* The value of all teaching, as I take it, consists far less in the facts acquired than in the action on the mind of the individual produced by the process of acquiring them.

The question which life asks of us all is, not 'What do you know?' but 'What can you do?' I believe that any one study, steady and earnestly followed, is useful in that respect; and perhaps the difference in their respective values is less than we are apt to suppose. If a man wants only to train himself to be a good walker, it matters very little what road he chooses to walk upon. But more than that—if you will allow me to express an opinion which I know may provoke dissent, but which I entertain very strongly—I believe that no course of reading or lecture hearing is of much avail unless something is to follow, either in the way of public examination —which I hold to be best—or failing that of close and careful self-examination by the student himself, to test and measure how much of what has been read is retained. What is merely listened to or run over by the eye is mostly forgotten; what has to be assimilated and reproduced in another shape becomes, as it were, worked into the very substance of the brain.

One word more on these points, and I shall have done. Every age has its fashions, some of them sensible, some very much the reverse; and one of the literary fashions of our time is to sneer at and depreciate what is termed 'culture,' as though it tended at best to make men skilful in doing things which being done are worthless, and as though there were some natural connection between strength of mind and that kind of simplicity which arises from ignorance. It is noticeable, I think, that that tendency often appears strongest in those whose own culture has been carried to the highest point; and the explanation I would suggest of it is, that the discontent with what has been accomplished, which is characteristic of a stirring and progressive time, and that painful sense of the shortness of individual life, compared with what has to be learnt and done in it, takes in such minds the form of an undue disparagement of those acquirements which they are conscious of possessing, and a proportionably excessive appreciation of those which they have been compelled to neglect. As a general rule, I think that the aim of a liberal education ought to be not to fit men for this or that special

profession exclusively, but to supply such acquirements and to sharpen such faculties as shall be useful in any walk of life. It is not good, I am sure, for anybody to be too early and exclusively buried in his own special pursuit. If from circumstances it is necessary that he should be, let him accept the necessity for that as for any other privation without complaining. But do not let him assert or think that it is in itself a good. Law, medicine, architecture, engineering, practical art—all these are pursuits of the highest usefulness and even necessity; but no man can even dabble in them all; nor has the architect any particular use for law, nor the lawyer for architecture. What they both want, what they both have a use for, is accuracy of thought, clearness of expression, and that indefinable something—excluding pedantry on the one hand, and vulgar coarseness on the other—which marks the man to whom literature has been more than the amusement of a casual hour.

You will sometimes hear it said—it is one of the crotchets of the day—that what is called culture is unfavourable to moral earnestness. Do not believe that. No doubt, like most untrue opinions, it has a shadow of plausibility. A man whose acquirements are few, whose range of knowledge is scanty and limited, is probably more apt than his educated neighbour to throw himself into some cause or controversy with an intense and unreasoning conviction that he is right, and that everybody else is wrong; and he is more likely also to underrate the complexity of human affairs, and to overvalue enormously the importance to mankind of that particular subject which has monopolised his attention. I do not say that that tendency is always, and under all circumstances, injurious. We are but weak at the best; and, perhaps, if the best and wisest of us all could see in how infinitesimal a degree the destinies of society can be affected by his utmost exertions, such clear-sightedness would serve rather to damp than to stimulate his energy. Happily, one may say in passing, there does not seem the slightest reason to apprehend, in the case of most of us, any process of that kind taking place.

But admitting all this—admitting that knowledge is often a check on action, and that great questions are often most earnestly taken up by those who can only see one side of them —I think there can be no doubt on which side the balance of advantage lies. If cultivated apathy has done its share of mischief (and recollect that you are just as likely to have the apathy without the cultivation), unreasoning activity, enthusiasm without knowledge or judgment, has done a hundred times more. If increased intellectual light, or what seemed such, has weakened some men's convictions, shaken their faith in the principles which govern mankind, and left them simply perplexed and helpless in face of the great problems of existence, let us point on the other hand to the horrible calamities which men, from the earliest ages of the world to our own, have brought on one another—not, we may hope, in wilful wickedness, but in the confused struggle to defend errors ignorantly and honestly mistaken for truth. No, gentlemen, whatever may come of it, let us not ignore or shrink from our responsibility. Every one of us is bound, not merely to do the thing which seems to him right, but to do also what lies in his power that the thing which seems to him right may be that which really is right. Good intentions will not help or save you if you take poison instead of medicine ; and in social matters we well know that ignorant philanthropy has often caused, perhaps often causes even now, as much mischief as could be done by deliberate ill will. We want zeal. We want earnestness for truth and justice. But the zeal of ignorance is a poor affair ; and the earnestness must be very shallow and unreal which will not bear the strictest scrutiny of the objects to which it is directed. Action is the end of all thought, but to act justly and effectively you must think wisely. The time is not wasted which is spent in laying solid foundations for the future ; nor that which soldiers pass in preparatory drill before they are trusted to take the field.

Recollect, too, that the stock of intellectual furniture which a man takes with him into business or professional life is not likely to be much increased afterwards. With most of

us, I fear, the faculty of receiving new ideas is the very earliest part of our organisation that decays. Special acquirements, professional experience, the caution and prudence and tact that come of protracted intercourse with the world are the growth of middle age; but I suspect that most busy men, if they took stock of their intellectual gains and losses, would find that after a certain time—say five-and-thirty or forty—the former had not been considerable. Make the most, then, of your opportunity, for it will not last long. Waste no regret on the past if it has done less for you than it ought. There is leisure to redeem all that. Dream no dreams of the future, the future will take care of itself; and whatever may be the difficulties you foresee, whatever the successes you expect, it is a hundred to one that neither the former nor the latter will come upon you in the way you now anticipate. But make your footing good at every step you take; do manfully the task that is allotted to you, know thoroughly the thing you have to learn, discipline your energies without exhausting them, and have faith enough in yourselves and in the good sense of your fellow-men to believe that whatever temporary success may be won by puffing and quackery (and, thank Heaven, such success is seldom more than temporary), the capable workman mostly gets the tools into his hands; opportunity sooner or later comes to nearly all who work and wait; and though I do not contend that there is no such thing as unmerited failure or unrewarded effort, yet even in that rare and painful case it is something to be able to think that you have tried your best, that though worsted in fair fight you have done justice to yourself and to yours, and that, if advancement and fortune have not been obtained, you will have at least preserved that inward content, that sense of honest self-approval, with which neither obscurity nor poverty are an unendurable affliction—without which, neither by world-wide fame nor untold wealth, can any real and lasting happiness be secured.

Gentlemen, I have nothing more to add. It is, perhaps, presumption on my part to offer you advice as I have done.

I only ask you to believe that it is sincerely given, and that it comes from one whose strongest sympathies are with intellectual labour. I know very well that spoken or written counsel cannot avail much—that to each man his own experience, his own mistakes, are the best, perhaps the only real, instruction. May your experience be as painless, your mistakes as few, as is compatible with the conditions under which we all live and work: and whatever you become, or wherever you go, I think you will always keep a warm corner in your hearts for that noble old University in which you have had your early training.

XII

DISCHARGED PRISONERS' AID SOCIETIES

Town Hall, Manchester: January 17, 1870

I think I may fairly congratulate you, on behalf of this Prisoners' Aid Society, on the fact that this institution—although on a small scale—is making steady and regular progress in the work which it has to do. In point of finance we have nothing to complain of, though, as we all know, the last two or three years have not been very favourable to the support of any charitable or philanthropic undertaking. The subscriptions and donations for 1869 are something under 160*l.*, which is rather less than the year before; but then it must be borne in mind that a good deal of the duty which formerly devolved upon us is now taken off our hands by a kindred society established at the other end of the county—the West Derby Society—founded on principles similar to ours, and in a considerable extent promoted by the same persons. The general results of the three years' work are that 418 persons have had their cases inquired into, that 321 have received assistance, and that of these, 205 (or nearly two-thirds of the whole) are known to be doing well. Thirty have turned out badly, and the remaining eighty-six have left this part of the country and cannot be traced; but it is fair to say of these eighty-six that a good many are known to have emigrated, and therefore we may fairly presume that they are in a fair way of earning an honest living.

No doubt it may be said that these results are not numerically great, and that is true; but if we had in this country what we ought to have, and what in a few years, I hope, we shall have, an institution of this character connected with

every considerable gaol in this country, so that no prisoner having gone through his term of punishment should be turned loose on the world without having the offer of honest employment put fairly before him—I say, if that were the case, you would find a very real and substantial impression made on the great mass of crime.

I do not want to overstate the case. I am not one of those persons who take a very rose-coloured view of what the future of society is going to be. I suspect it will differ much less from the past than many sanguine and amiable people are apt to think. I do not look forward to the time when our gaols shall be without inmates and our judges have no prisoners to try. Education may do something; the growth of temperate habits among the population may do, and I think will do, a great deal; increased cleanliness, and decency, and comfort in the homes of the poorer classes will have their effect; but after all that has been or that can be done by these means, there will always, I am afraid, be some members of society who are hopelessly and incorrigibly perverse. There will always be some easily led away by bad companions—or misled, it may be, by the example of their own parents and nearest relatives. There will be some who have an exaggerated dislike for work in any form, and who have acquired a most unfounded idea that a life of crime is an easy and pleasant life; and there will be some, too—not so rare a class as may be supposed—who seem to have hardly enough mental power of any kind, and hardly enough of sense or intellect to know clearly what the meaning of right and wrong is.

Yet there is another class to add to these—I mean those who are not what we exactly call habitual criminals, but who in the main get their living by vagrancy and begging, and who, when these resources fail, find out worse means of making out their subsistence. Between all these classes, I am afraid, whatever may be done by schools, model dwellings, and temperance teachings, there will always be work enough both for the magistrates and the reformatory agencies.

I look upon it that the functions of this society are two-fold—first and mainly, to see to it that, so far as our operations extend, no man or woman wishing to leave off a life of crime shall be forced back into it by the inability to find honest employment; and, secondly, which is a matter of some importance, we want to deprive any plausible scamp who, having served his time in the Manchester Gaol, has gone back to his old habits and associates—we want to deprive such a person of the excuse always ready, namely, 'That I wanted to get my living honestly, and no one would employ me.' To such a person the magistrate who tries him may fairly say, 'Did you go to the Prisoners' Aid Society? You knew of its existence; you knew it was ready to help you; did you ask there for work? and, if you did not, what do you mean by saying that you could not get employment?'

We have taken a great step within the last year or two in the passing of the Habitual Criminals Act.[1] We have begun to recognise the fact that although with all our vigilance and care the prevention of isolated offences is impossible, still it is possible, and it is our duty, to protect society against a class who live by making war against property. I hope for my part that the powers conferred by that Act will be seriously and strenuously exercised. It is no cruelty—it is a kindness to society—to follow up, pursue, and hunt down, as it were, men who break the law, and to make them feel that it is a kind of business which does not pay. But if, on the one hand, the law should be, as it ought to be, inexorable to those who do wrong, so, on the other hand, society should be merciful to those who are willing to mend. It is not by severity alone, it is not by kindness and humanity alone, but it is by using severity and kindness at the proper time and in the proper place that we can make war effectually on crime.

[1] The Habitual Criminals Act, 1869, was repealed and replaced by the fuller and more detailed Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871.

XIII

CHARITABLE RELIEF—ORGANISATION OF CHARITY

First Annual Meeting of the Society for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity. London: March 30, 1870

I do not intend to detain you long, but having taken the chair at this meeting—and I rejoice to see it so numerously attended—a few opening remarks will naturally be expected from me. I suppose we shall all be agreed that the permanence and increase of pauperism in this country, and especially in London, is a subject which calls for the serious attention of every one who cares either for the welfare of our population or for the honour of our country. The facts which we have to deal with are simple, although the inferences which may be drawn from them vary almost indefinitely.

There is, certainly, no want of wealth in London. That is a proposition which does not require proof. The mere land on which this metropolis and its suburbs stand, taking a square of ten miles north, south, east, and west each way from St. Paul's, has been estimated to represent a capital equal to the whole National Debt. There is no want of liberality; in point of fact it has been proved over and over again, that the amount of money given away in London is more than enough to feed and clothe comfortably every person in it who can, by any stretch of the meaning of the words, be considered either a pauper or in a state of destitution. It has been shown upon evidence which, so far as I know, has never been disputed, that, excluding relief derived from rates, something like 5,000,000*l.* yearly is given away in London for charitable purposes of one kind or another; and, including rates, the amount would be between 7,000,000*l.* and 8,000,000*l.*

Now, at that rate, we ought to be able to feed and clothe, well and comfortably, at least 400,000 persons; for the national income, calculated at between 600,000,000*l.* and 700,000,000*l.*, does not give an average of much more than 20*l.* per head, and, of course, if they are treated simply as paupers, the cost of feeding and clothing them is very considerably less.

Yet, what is the state of the case? Pauperism, as Mr. Greg has put it in one of his lately published and very able essays, increases more rapidly either than charity or wealth. In 1858 it included 3 per cent. of the population of London; in 1868 it included 5 per cent.; and we all know that not a week passes, and hardly a day, that we do not see in the newspapers some case recorded of death from starvation. Yet the revenue has not fallen off. The depression in trade, which, no doubt, has been severe in some employments and in some localities, has not caused any large reduction—indeed, I do not think it has caused any decrease at all—either in imports or exports, or in the consumption of articles of popular luxury, such as tea, sugar, tobacco, beer, and spirits, the consumption of which is the surest measure of the degree of comfort enjoyed at a given time by the working classes.

That is briefly the state of things we have to deal with. It admits, to my mind, of only one explanation. By want of proper supervision and control, by excessive laxity, and absence of discrimination between the deserving and undeserving, we are pauperising, year by year, an increasing number of our people. I do not now speak of the operations of the Poor Law; that is a great subject, but it is beyond the scope of our present meeting. I speak of private charity, and especially of that which is given through the medium of organised societies. The first thing I wish to point out is this—that excessive laxity produces precisely the same effect as excessive severity, in depriving those who really deserve assistance of their chance of getting it; because, wherever money is given away lavishly and loosely there will always be a rush and a scramble for it; the most clamorous, the most impudent, the most hardened, those who have most completely

thrown aside all remains of shame or modesty, will get the whole, and those who have retained their self-respect will be left to starve. But more than this, I firmly believe that, by our lax and careless ways of dealing with these matters, we are putting into the heads of a large number of the working classes the notion that it is all nonsense attempting, however high their wages may be, to lay by for the future. If work is plentiful, they say, 'We can live well;' if work fails, it is the business of society to keep them. I will only refer, in proof, to the East end of London, where it has been affirmed, and I believe truly, that the regular expectation of charitable relief has brought in vagrants and tramps from all the country round, and actually has raised the rent of lodgings within the area within which relief was distributed.

Now, we cannot afford to go on in this way for ever. The whole thing is in a muddle, and to set it right it is not the use of our pockets that is wanted so much as the use of our brains. The object is simple. We want to sift the grain from the chaff—to leave the vagrant, the tramp, the professional beggar, the utterly and hopelessly shiftless and reckless person, be his employment what it may, to the stringent rules and tight discipline of the Union, and for those persons the rules ought to be stringent and the discipline strictly enforced; while to those who suffer by no fault of their own we desire that a large and generous indulgence should be shown. Now, it is not enough for that purpose merely to teach people that benevolence is one thing and beneficence another, or merely to declaim, in a vague manner, against indiscriminate giving. Until people can feel sure that the deserving poor will and can obtain relief, it is no use talking to them, they will give indiscriminately; that is to say, they will give though they know that the chances are ten to one that those whom they help are impostors, because they do not like to face that single chance the other way, that the person to whom they have refused relief may go home, and starve, and die.

It is vain to argue against a feeling like that; it exists, and always will exist. If you wish men and women in the

well-to-do classes to do what they ought in not allowing themselves to be preyed upon by rogues, you must supply them with a tolerably easy and tolerably handy test by which they may be enabled to distinguish between the impostor and the honest man. It is idle to argue, in a state of society such as ours, that every one, whatever his situation, ought to give personal attention to the poor. That is, no doubt, an amiable idea; but a great lawyer, a physician in leading practice, a Cabinet Minister, or an active Member of Parliament, must be of more use to the community as a whole by doing the work which he is trained and accustomed to do, and by sticking to that, than he can be by taking upon himself the functions of a relieving officer, which he would, probably, discharge very badly. Division of labour is the first characteristic of modern society, and it applies to charity as well as everything else. The duty, therefore, which confessedly requires to be performed, and which individuals cannot conveniently perform, is one that naturally devolves upon an organisation formed for the purpose.

Now, what is it that the organisation which we have met here to support to-day is intended to do? In the first place, if properly established and supported, it ought, pretty nearly, to put an end to the great and growing nuisance of street begging. Only lay it down as a rule not to give in the streets money on any pretence whatever, but instead of money to give a ticket entitling the bearer to plain food if he is in want of it, and to an inquiry by competent agents into his antecedents and requirements—only make that practice universal, and beggars will disappear from your streets and roads. In nine cases out of ten, according to the experience we have had wherever the system has been tried, the tickets will not be presented at all; in the tenth case there is *primâ facie* evidence of real want, and that case will be thoroughly and fairly inquired into. But more than this, it is desired—I think I had better put what the promoters have to say in their own words:—

'1. That there should be in each Poor-Law district of

London a recognised centre of charitable operations, to which all persons who may appear to be deserving of assistance out of the funds of private benevolence, may be referred, independently of all denominational or other differences.

'2. That full information should be afforded by all charitable agencies at work in a district to a common centre, and that such agencies should not work independently of each other, but under harmonious adjustment, and with due recognition of the province of each.

'3. That all cases which belong properly to the Poor Law should be handed over to the Guardians, and that only cases in which temporary aid is likely to prove of permanent benefit to the recipient should be left to the operation of private charity.'

That is an extract from the Report of the Association. Putting it briefly, the object is this, that the numerous local charities of London should be made to co-operate instead of competing, and that all of them, as far as may be, should be brought into co-operation with the agents through whom the Poor Law is administered.

I will not, in these merely introductory remarks, go further into details, because I think they will be better supplied by those of my friends here present who have taken an active part in founding this Association; but I have no hesitation in saying that the principle of action proposed appears to me to be sound; that although an experiment—and I am not here to contend that it is anything more—it is in my judgment a hopeful experiment, and deserves at least to be fairly tested, with what results we must leave to the experience of the future to show.

XIV

THE HOUSE OF LORDS [1]

London: May 4, 1870

I have great pleasure in returning thanks on behalf of that branch of the Legislature of which accident and the constitution of the country have made me a member. Whether we are or are not worthy to be accounted amongst those powers of evil to whom the President, with commendable prudence, announces that he pays his respects, or whether we may be classed amongst influences less formidable and less noxious to mankind, I will not myself disclaim whatever share of responsibility devolves upon me as having very often taken part in Parliamentary Committees before which engineering matters are discussed. I, however, do not altogether agree with the account which the President gave of those inquiries, because I think it more commonly happens that, instead of the brow-beating being on the part of the legal gentlemen, the engineers do with the Committees pretty nearly as they please.

Now, with regard to the House of Lords, I cannot say that at the present time we are suffering from over-work, and perhaps it may even be said that we do not set the country generally an example of industry. All I can say is, the fault is not ours. We do such work as comes to us to do; and you know, if the stream is dry the mill must stand still. We do not profess to occupy a position of rivalry in point of political power to the House of Commons. We have not done so, I should say, for the last hundred years; but, nevertheless, I believe that in the present and in the future, as in the past, there remain to us special functions to discharge, and an

[1] See the Speeches delivered on the subject in 1862 and 1889.

appropriate sphere of public utility. Every year, by the nature of the case, the House of Commons is more and more burdened with multifarious duties which it cannot thoroughly perform, and which, from a very natural feeling, it does not like altogether to part with. Now, we know that work done in a hurry is apt to be scamped, and that such work, before it is finally turned out, requires to be well looked over; and it is that looking over—that supervision—which, as it seems to me, is our most appropriate function. I really believe that this is much more our duty than that which is most commonly and popularly attributed to us—viz. the duty of retarding, for a very limited period, the doing of certain things which must necessarily be done sooner or later; and the duty of which I speak is one for which I think we have special advantages.

Taken as a body, we consist, so to speak, of a jury selected at random from the educated classes. But we also include amongst us many—I see some in this room now—who have made public affairs and political studies a lifelong occupation. Again, we are, as every assembly ought to be, and must be, responsible to the public at large. But while we admit that responsibility, we feel that we are not responsible individually to any mere fraction of the public in the shape of a constituency. National opinion we are bound to obey, and we obey it willingly; but to temporary or local prejudices we can afford to be, as it is our duty to be, indifferent.

I do not know that I can claim for the House of Lords that it has any close connection with the noble profession of engineering, though I do know this—that if it happened to be our fate to travel as a body by a railway, and if the locomotive broke down, there are two or three members of our body who, with the proper appliances given to them, would be quite able to set it right with their own hands. But though our work lies in a different direction, still I think we may say we have had something to do with the industrial and engineering history of the country. You cannot deliver a lecture upon the steam-engine in which there shall not be mentioned

the name of Lord Worcester. You can hardly tell the story of the iron industry of this country without some reference to the family of Dudley. You cannot speak of inland navigation without giving his due to that Duke of Bridgewater to whose perseverance amidst many difficulties and many obstructions is mainly owing the development of the canal system of this country, and, in a great degree, the present position which Manchester and Liverpool now occupy.

I do not know how it is or why it is, but undoubtedly men learnt to fight one another in the field, and to outwit one another at the bar, long before they set their minds steadily to establish communications over every part of the world, and over the sea, and to search into the earth for the treasures there contained. It would seem as if, in point of date, the combative energies of men displayed themselves earlier than those which are directed to industrial and co-operative ends. And so it has happened that the House of Lords, which is in a certain sense a record of the history of the country, contains on its roll some eighty names placed there by success in the profession of the law, and possibly as many which are due to naval or military distinction, while those who owe their position among us to an industrial career are still comparatively few. Yet there are some names—I may cite those of Belper and Wolverton—which represent in our ancient assembly the latest components of our modern civilisation. And I say only what I think and feel, and I say it rather in the interest of the House of Lords than in that of the engineering profession, which can very well take care of itself—when I tell you that I not only hope, but firmly believe, that the next generation will see the honours of the Peerage very considerably extended among those who are the representatives of the industrial interests of the country.

XV

HOSPITALS

On Laying the Foundation Stone of the Stanley Hospital, Liverpool: June 6, 1870

I am not in the habit, as many of you are possibly aware, of delivering long addresses either here or elsewhere, and least of all should I do so where, as I fear is the case on the present occasion, it is impossible that my voice can reach more than a small portion of the vast assemblage which I rejoice to see collected here. Speeches are about the only article, as far as I know, of which, whatever the quality may be, the supply never runs short. I hold that if a man has anything to tell that is really worth hearing, he can generally do it in a very few words, and if he has nothing to tell, there is no use in his taking up much of his own or anybody else's time in announcing that fact. I hold also, though I do not know that it is a very popular doctrine, that the most practical and useful part of the world's work is generally that which gets itself done with the least amount of noise and fuss.

But there are occasions on which public utterances, besides being a matter of custom, are legitimate and justifiable; and one of those is when we are proclaiming to our neighbours, and to the country at large, not the accomplishment, but the commencement of a useful public undertaking. When your undertaking is complete, ceremonials and addresses, although unobjectionable, are not to my mind particularly necessary. When the thing is done the best course is to say as little about it as may be, and begin afresh upon something that is likely to be equally useful in its turn. But when you are asking your friends and neighbours to tax themselves in order to execute a certain plan, it becomes necessary to tell

them, first, that the plan is there ready, and only wanting funds to turn it into a reality; and next that it is of such a nature as to make the supply of these funds a public duty.

Now I do not think, especially after what the Mayor has said, that I need give you many details as to the want that exists for this hospital. Turn your eyes to the Mersey, and you will see lining its shores a range of docks the most magnificent and the most costly, without exception, that any nation at any period of its history has constructed. You will see there works which have cost many millions, and which are far from being yet complete. They will stretch, as you are aware, when finished, far to seaward of the spot on which we now stand; and remembering the local history of the last fifty years—remembering that miraculous growth of Liverpool and its suburbs, of which the Mayor has reminded us; bearing in mind, too, that that progress, though, no doubt, at varying rates of speed, has continued in bad times as well as in good, through years of cotton famine, of depressed trade, and of manufacturing distress—remembering all these things, it seems to me not rash to predict that there are many present who will see this coast up to Seaforth—and perhaps beyond—filled up to the depth of a mile inland with ships and houses, with warehouses and railway-stations, with a few churches and schools, and I am afraid a great many public-houses; in short, with all the requirements, good and bad, of a dense population. That is for us, in these parts, simply an inevitable destiny, unless either foreign war on a vast scale, or domestic disturbance interfere; and for my part, I hope and believe we shall have sense enough to keep out of one and the other. From the commercial and statistical point of view—and it is a point of view with which I acknowledge a good deal of sympathy—that is a great result.

But good and evil are easily intermingled in human affairs. With the sunshine you must have the shadow, and the shadow which the prosperity of a great trading community throws is unhappily a very dark one. With every fresh application of mechanical power, you have liability to a fresh

class of accidents arising from the use of that power. With every increase in the density of a given population, other things being equal, I fear it is a fact established beyond dispute that there is an increased liability to certain forms of epidemic disease. When men and women are closely packed together contagion spreads more rapidly, and do what you will you cannot make the air of a great city as healthy as a country village. You have only to look at the rate at which children die in places like Liverpool to see what is the difference, and although sanitary improvement has done a good deal already, and may do a good deal more, I fear the difference will always continue to be considerable. And if I turn from the sanitary to the social point of view, it is, I am afraid, indisputable that the difficulty of dealing with individual poverty and distress is greater in a community of some hundreds of thousands than when each family lives among a few neighbours, all of whom know, and are known to, one another.

Personal sympathy and personal acquaintance are things not easy to do without or to replace in the relief of the poor; and in a great mercantile or manufacturing community they will be rarer than elsewhere, not assuredly because there is less benevolence, but because everybody has got his own business to mind, and hardly anybody knows the name of his next-door neighbour. You may, indeed, argue that with so much wealth and prosperity we ought not to have many poor; but, unhappily, that is not a conclusion that experience verifies. Where there is drunkenness there will also be improvidence and pauperism, and often things worse than either; and though we may be mending in that respect—and I think on the whole we are—I am afraid it must be admitted that we are still very far from being a temperate people. So, again, where unskilled labour is much in demand, and where, as in business connected with shipping and docks, a good deal of that demand is uncertain and fluctuating, you will have, I fear, a class permanently on the edge of want.

Let sanitarists do what they can—and they can do much—to check the first growth of disease; let educationists and

social reformers exert themselves as they will to raise the lowest class of honest labourers into a better position; we may feel quite sure that as long as any of us live, doctors will have diseases to cure, and benevolent persons will not want for objects of legitimate charity to assist. Well, then, I think we may assume that if a hospital is a good thing anywhere it will be a good thing here. You have the river and the docks close at hand, both of them likely, I am afraid, to furnish an unfailing supply of casualties. You will have all round this building a vast population, chiefly of the wage-receiving class, and I cannot expect or hope, whatever I or you might wish, that other causes of suffering or disease will be wanting, for which the individual sufferer is himself morally responsible. You have no rival institution of the same character within a distance of about a mile and a-half, and none such is likely, for a long while at least, to be set up.

I need hardly trouble you further, for the usefulness of a well-managed hospital is one of those things which you cannot easily prove, just because no amount of argument or demonstration can make it clearer than it is. I have lately had occasion to say at a meeting in London, and I now repeat it here, that of all human institutions a well-managed hospital is one of the least liable to abuse. There is absolutely no room for imposture about it. A patient has no motive for pretending to be ill when he is not, and if he were to make the attempt he would probably fail. Then, again, though against the ordinary contingencies of life you may fairly expect even a poor man to provide, yet the accident of being thrown for weeks out of work, either by illness or casualty, and thereby losing the means of meeting even ordinary expenses at a moment when he has extraordinary expenses to incur, is one so exceptional in its character as to justify the application of an exceptional remedy. So, again, you may pauperise a man—that is, you may teach him to depend on begging rather than on working—by helping him over money difficulties, because money difficulties are apt to recur, and with them recurs the temptation to beg; but nobody who has

been treated for a broken leg ever wishes to break it again merely for the pleasure of being cured.

There is still another view of the case, and that is that by bringing together the sick and the injured into one place you enormously economise the valuable time of the leading medical men, and thereby greatly multiply their power of work, besides setting up a school of medical science which is a benefit, of course, to every class of the community. These things are obvious, and I should not touch upon them except for one reason. But in days like these, when there is—and I rejoice to see it—great zeal in the cause of the suffering and the poor, but zeal not always accompanied by knowledge or judgment, and when, accordingly, many forms of so-called charity are afloat—many useless, and some absolutely mischievous—we suffer under a double danger. Men get fairly puzzled to choose among all these various institutions. Those who are naturally free-handed and liberal either shut their eyes and give blindly and indiscriminately to all, or reluctantly abstain from giving to almost all, from the fear that they will be doing more harm than good; and I need not say, in that perplexity and difficulty, others of an opposite turn of mind find an excellent excuse for not helping anybody except themselves. It seems, therefore, worth while to say—and I say it with entire conviction—that if any one feels he has a duty to perform in the matter of giving, and is perplexed in his choice, he cannot go wrong if he selects as the dispenser of his charity a well-managed hospital in a populous town.

I hope that this institution will fulfil the first of those conditions—that of good management. The second in the ordinary progress of events it necessarily must fulfil; and here, on this public occasion, and in the presence of some thousands of those whom its future welfare most concerns, I commend it to the support and favour of my friends and neighbours, and the residents in and about this great city, who have shown by many a stately building, and in many a durable institution, that their public usefulness and their public spirit is not inferior to their private wealth.

XVI

THE PRESERVATION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS

MEETING TO PROMOTE THE RESTORATION OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL
LIVERPOOL: JUNE 7, 1870

. . . . ,—What I am here to contend for is that we, the Englishmen of to-day, with 1,000 years of civilisation behind us, and with a future opening, if not before our country, at least before our descendants scattered over many countries, of which it is difficult to foresee the limits, have duties to discharge, not merely to the present generation but to posterity—not merely to this country but to the whole English-speaking world. And one of the most obvious and most pressing of those duties is, not to suffer the destruction, through carelessness or neglect, of any national memorial, which, once destroyed, can never be replaced, but which, if carefully preserved, will be a help to those who, it may be five hundred years hence, shall be endeavouring to search out and reproduce the past history of their race. I think we see clearly how, as the world grows older, the longing to penetrate backward into the remote past becomes more and more intense. It may often be vain, often end in failure, seldom indeed can it end in more than partial success; but it is of all human pursuits one of the most deeply interesting, and there are few thoughtful men, I suppose, who have not some sympathy with it.

Now, of all memorials of antiquity, architectural work is the most durable, and that upon which there can be the least of either deception or mistake; and accordingly we find that respect for such memorials is the universal and increasing characteristic of an advanced civilisation. If, for instance, we

were to hear that any ruler of Egypt proposed to pull down one of the Pyramids for the sake of its stones, there would be an outcry of remonstrance throughout Europe. Everybody would feel that the thing which it was proposed to destroy was in some sense the common possession of the whole human race. The Middle Ages have left us two sets of buildings, each essentially typical and characteristic of the time that produced them—the feudal castle and the cathedral. You have comparatively few specimens left of either. They signalise an age which, with all its good and all its evil, is irrevocably gone, and which you can no more revive than you can resuscitate the Roman Empire. We do not, happily for our comfort, live in feudal castles; and most of our modern worship is carried on in buildings which have a very remote resemblance indeed to mediæval cathedrals. The more reason, I say, why you should preserve that which you have: why you should carefully guard from destruction that which, if destroyed, you cannot recreate: the more reason why, as inheritors of a long-descended past, you should feel that you are trustees for the future.

XVII

THE EDUCATION ACT, 1870—*SCHOOL BOARDS*

MEETING TO DISCUSS THE OBJECTS OF THE MANCHESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION. PRESTON: OCTOBER 20, 1870

I DO not intend to occupy much of the time of this meeting, because the subject of it is one which the discussions of the last few months, both in Parliament and in the press, have rendered thoroughly familiar to every one who is likely to take an interest in it. But it will be expected of me that, in taking the chair, I should say a few words as to the object which has brought us together; the more so as similar meetings have been and are being held for the same purpose in various parts of the country.

Now, what the promoters of this meeting desire, briefly stated, is to increase in various ways the efficiency, and to add to the number, of those elementary schools in this part of the country which are in connection with the Established Church. Other religious denominations are no doubt exerting themselves in the same way, and I am sure that my friends on the right and left will bear me out when I say that the position of those who are now before you is not that of hostility to those other denominations, but rather of friendly rivalry with them, and of co-operation, though by separate and independent agencies, towards one common end. We most of us know what is the principle, and what are the leading provisions, of that important measure for the extension of elementary teaching which has become law within the last few months. It is not my duty or my wish to criticise that measure; but I may say in passing that, looking at it not with the eye of a theorist or of a partisan, but

from the point of view of a practical administrator, it seems to me to have been conceived in a spirit of fairness, moderation, and of equity as between the various parties and interests concerned.

What Parliament has in substance said to the people, whether in towns or countries, is this: 'We intend to have every child in England, without exception, taught to read, write, and cipher, so that it may have a fair start in the race of life, and be capable of discharging its duty to its family and the State. We hold you, the local authorities, and you the ratepayers, responsible for this being done, and done effectually; but, provided you do it, we do not want to tie your hands too tightly as to the means which you shall employ. If you can get on without compulsion, so much the better; if you cannot, you are authorised to use compulsion. If you can work the machine through the agencies actually existing, do so and welcome; if you cannot, or would rather not try, there is provided in the School Boards a new machine which will be more effective. If voluntary funds, met by aid from the State, will suffice, go on with your voluntary arrangement; if that breaks down, there is a system of rating to fall back upon.' That is what the Legislature in effect has said; and I think, as far as one can judge, the plan is one which bids fair to obtain the maximum of useful result with the minimum of antagonism, opposition, or injury to the feelings of individuals or classes.

But recollect this, the Education Act of last Session is, upon the face of it, merely a tentative and experimental measure. There is no finality about it; and, in the present and undecided state of opinion, there can be none. So much, however, is clear—that it holds out to the various religious denominations into which the community is divided the very strongest possible incentive to exertion; because, while on the one hand they are told that on certain conditions their assistance and co-operation are invited and welcomed, Parliament wisely, as I think, in the circumstances of our country, does not refuse to avail itself of the powerful

assistance of those ecclesiastical bodies which, it is universally admitted, have done so much to promote elementary education, and which could do so much to impede any system of teaching to which they conscientiously objected—it yet, on the other hand, holds over them and over us, and over the entire community, a very distinct and intelligible warning—I prefer to call it so—I will not use a more unpleasant term—that if the educational requirements of the nation are not met by the agencies now in force, or by those which it has recently sanctioned, those requirements will have to be met in some other way; and probably no future arrangement that can be come to is likely to be as unobjectionable as the present in the eyes of those who have in their hands the working of our present elementary school system.

I think I may assume that it is not the object of any one in this room either to find fault with the Education Act of last Session—because that would be useless—or to endeavour to turn and twist it to any special purpose of his own. The promoters of this meeting desire, as I understand them, honestly to work the Act according to the intention of its framers, and to use the powers which it confers in the spirit and for the purpose in which and for which they were meant to be used.

Now, the Act gives to every locality the option of either extending and more effectually working the existing schools or of creating Boards to establish new schools which shall be supported by rates. I have not a word to say against the system of School Boards. They are an experiment which ought to be tried fairly, and which will be tried, I suppose, in pretty nearly every large town throughout England. It may be that we shall come to them universally in the end; as to that I say nothing.

But it seems to me, speaking my individual opinion, that they are likely to answer best where the area of their operations is largest, and that they will have the most difficulties to encounter where the area is smallest. First, because in the large towns you have a wider choice among educated men

eligible to serve on the Boards; next, because, where each important denomination is well represented, there is less chance of injury, real or imaginary, being sustained by a minority; and, lastly, because the dislike to the payment of rates, a feeling very natural, is likely to be strongest in agricultural districts, where people make their money more slowly, and where, as the saying is, they are apt to look twice at a shilling before they part with it. There is another and a very obvious consideration to be borne in mind, and that is that those who are in the least haste to establish School Boards will have the best chance of profiting by the experience and the inevitable mistakes—for everybody must make mistakes—of those who make the first start in that line.

I do not think, therefore, that those persons are either unreasonable or illiberal who, in their own neighbourhoods, are anxious, as far as may be, to enlarge the old foundations instead of laying new ones, and to go on as long as they can with the educational machinery to which they and their neighbours have been accustomed, and which does not involve any addition to local taxation. At any rate, in doing so, they are only adhering to a system which the Legislature has expressly sanctioned, and to which it consents that assistance shall be given from national funds. Now, my only feeling in the matter is this: let us have the Act effectually put into operation; let us, by whatever agency we may severally prefer, render primary instruction at least universal; and, seeing as I do in this proposed Diocesan Board of Education an engine which may be powerful for that purpose, I for one give it a very willing support.

XVIII

THE VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT

LIVERPOOL: DECEMBER 14, 1870

IT is now about a dozen years since the Volunteer movement began, and though, like all human institutions, it has had its faults and its shortcomings, though it has passed through the inevitable alternation of rather exaggerated praise at one time and rather undue depreciation at another, yet I am bound to affirm—looking back to the time when it first started into life—that it has, on the whole, far exceeded the expectations, and fully realised the hopes, of those who had to do with it from the first. It has—I will not say created, because the same spirit existed before—but it has stimulated and intensified the sentiment of individual patriotism by making men practically understand that they owe something in the way of duty to their country besides paying rates and taxes.

It is a truth, though a seeming paradox, that we value most that for which we have made most sacrifices, and I hardly think that the popular opinion at the present moment does sufficient justice to the readiness with which many thousands of men, not having much time at their disposal, nor seeking occupation on some vacant day of the week, but employed, many of them, in hard and laborious duties during the greater portion of their working hours, have sacrificed ungrudgingly a large part of their few and valued holidays, without any other reward than the consciousness of public usefulness and the pleasure of studying practically a manly and honourable profession.

Other and not unimportant uses have been served by the

movement. Social good-will has been increased; the public health has gained; men filling sedentary occupations have been and are better in many ways for a little soldiering. But these are minor considerations. The main point is that in our Volunteer forces we have the spectacle of upwards of 150,000 men of almost every class giving their time and their labours freely and spontaneously to the public service, and pledging themselves, if needs be, to give their lives for the general defence. I am not insensible—no man can be insensible, especially in times like these—to the defects that must attend any force organised upon a purely voluntary principle. Those who do a thing only occasionally, and by the way, will never do it quite as well, assuming equality in other respects, as those whose sole and constant occupation it is.

Something might be said, and when Parliament meets I think you will hear a good deal said, as to the expediency, when men have once freely entered Volunteer corps, of binding them more strictly, during some short and defined term, to the duties of attendance and drill. But whatever may be done in that respect, when the general overhauling of all our military arrangements takes place, I trust, and I believe, that the very greatest care will be exercised to leave unimpaired that which is the essence of our Volunteer system—I mean the free, spontaneous, and practically gratuitous character of the service given. If other reserve forces are wanted—I do not enter into the question here—let the deficiency be supplied. But this at least is clear, that by the present system the country gets at a trifling direct cost, and, what is quite as important, with very little disturbance of ordinary business, a vast additional defensive force which it could not command so cheaply in any other way.

I am quite aware that there are many people who, having been struck with admiration—and no wonder that they should be—at the marvellous power, whether for aggression or defence, which the Prussian organisation gives, wish to see some modification of that system introduced into England. To such persons I would say, take hints from your neighbours

by all means, but do not servilely copy their institutions without first considering whether your position and your requirements are the same as theirs.

Now, we are in a totally different position, as has been said many hundreds of times, from that of any Continental State. We have no frontiers. No enemy can pour half a million of men into this country. The utmost strength which we can be called upon to repel is only that which can be carried across the Channel by a hostile fleet, assuming such a fleet to have escaped our own navy, or that a temporary disaster has occurred. That is what we have to provide against; and when people talk of drilling and disciplining by degrees, year after year, the entire able-bodied male population of the country—that is, some 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 at least—in order to repel a possible attack of, at the most, 100,000 men, I say they must either have a wonderfully low opinion of the fighting powers of Englishmen, or else they must be thinking of something beyond mere defence, that is to say, of a policy which I will not here characterise or argue against, but which I believe to be neither suited to the ideas of our time nor consistent with the real interests of the country.

I do not quarrel with those who contend that the State has a right, if it thinks fit, to call on every able-bodied man for personal service. Rights are more easily talked about than defined, but an appeal of that kind has always been made, and I suppose always will be made when the exigencies of national defence require it. Extraordinary occasions require, and, because they require, justify extraordinary measures; but when in ordinary times you come to apply the principle of compulsory service you are met with this difficulty. If you apply it universally and endeavour to train everybody, you are making ten times the amount of preparation that you can possibly require. If, on the other hand, you are merely to pick and choose, or take men by lot, you cannot by any arrangement I ever heard of prevent great practical inequality and injustice in the administration of the law. If you admit substitutes, the hardship falls exclusively on the poor; if you

insist on personal service in every case, then the loss of time, which to the man of fortune is nothing, and which to the lowest class of labourer is unimportant, because the pay while serving is as good as he would get elsewhere, becomes a very heavy tax on the skilled industry of the artisan, or the professional man, or those who have business habits to acquire.

There is something also to be said, in a country where the sentiment of individual freedom and conscience is as highly developed as here, against the justice of compelling men to take a personal part against their will in wars not merely defensive, and which they may themselves, in their conscience, believe to be unjust. But I do not dwell on that; I simply assert my belief that, in the long run, it will be even cheaper, to say nothing of any other consideration, to pay the fair market value of the military labour you want rather than to take it by force. However, I do not wish to dogmatise on these matters; I have given my opinion for what it may be worth; if I am wrong, I am open to correction. Of one thing only I am sure: that a nation, although its first duty is to provide efficiently for its own defence, was made to be something else than a camp; and that a system under which wars shall be carried on—not, as in modern days till now, by comparatively limited armies, but by the whole mass of the people—is not an advance in civilisation, but an essentially retrograde movement. It may be change; it certainly is not progress, if that much-abused word has any meaning at all. I ought, perhaps, to apologise for trespassing on what is more or less controversial matter. My excuse must be that everybody's head is full of those matters; and no wonder, after what we have seen for the last six months.

Accept, gentlemen, my warmest wishes for your continued prosperity and efficiency; and let me add the assurance of my conviction that, whatever the changes of detail which may be introduced into the Volunteer Service with a view to make that Service more effective, those changes you will cheerfully accept, knowing as you do that it is not enough, although it

may be much, to give time and trouble to public duty. If we want to serve the State efficiently, we must often do it at the sacrifice of our own favourite ideas; and the true test of public spirit is to be ready to help on good and useful public work, even when that work is not carried on exactly after the fashion which we should ourselves desire.

XIX

CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

London: February 18, 1871

It has been my fortune now for more than twenty years frequently to attend, and not unfrequently to take the chair at, gatherings such as that of this evening; and there is one thing which I have learnt, that the success and pleasure of the meeting depend mainly upon four things: good company, good music, good wine, and speeches that shall not be too long. Now, as to the first of these conditions you have satisfied yourselves; the second and third, I am bound to say, I think those who have had the management of this entertainment have provided for us in a very satisfactory way; and, as to the fourth, I will answer for that, as far as I am concerned.

I am not going to deliver a lecture upon hospitals in general, or upon the particular hospital whose cause we are engaged in promoting. We all know, of course, the general arguments that can be, and always have been, used in favour of this particular form of charity. We know that hospitals are less open to abuse and to imposture than any other form of charitable relief. We know that they assist in the case of accidents which may happen to anybody in any class. We know that as schools of medical science they are equally useful to the rich as well as to the poor; and we know that they repay their cost to the community over and over again in sending back to their work cured and healthy men, who, if they had not been attended to, would probably have left their families destitute. Nor is it necessary that I should argue as to the greater want of institutions of this kind

that exists in a large town rather than in any other part of England, because, unhappily, we are aware that whatever we may do in a sanitary way—and a great deal has been done, and a great deal more is doing—still you can never, by any means that are known to us, make a great city healthy in the same sense in which a rural district is healthy.

The truth is that no great town keeps up its numbers except by the help of the influx from the outside. Sanitary authorities have often said, and I believe it can be proved to be the literal truth, that if you could build a wall round London, or any other great city, and allow no one to come from the outside to reside within that wall, and allow no one who was residing inside to come out, so that the experiment could be fairly tried, you would find in the course of two or three generations that the population within would dwindle and decay until Nature had asserted her rights, had redressed the balance, and the evil of overcrowding had so remedied itself. That is not altogether, perhaps, a pleasant view to take of the matter; but, pleasant or not, it is the truth. It follows, therefore, that if you want public hospitals, as we do, everywhere, there is no place where we want them so much as in the heart of a great city. And we want them for another reason—a reason connected with social rather than with sanitary considerations—that in a place like London, that tie of neighbourhood, of local connections between man and man, which in a thinly populated district is so powerful, is almost altogether wanting.

You cannot have in a city with three millions of people the state of things which exists in a small country village, where everybody knows everybody; you cannot have, I mean, that which is the best of all forms of charity, the individual relief, the individual assistance given by man to man, where the giver and the receiver are all known to one another, because, in a great city, though there is probably, if anything, more distress than in other places, although it is there that the contrasts of wealth and poverty are most sharply drawn, still, in such a locality you cannot have that

personal acquaintance between the rich and the poor, because the greater part of the distress is in districts which the rich very rarely have occasion to visit. I would carry the argument one step further, and I should contend that children are precisely those for whom, in a place like London, hospitals are most likely to be required, because it is precisely among the children that that high death-rate which makes the difference in the mortality between town and country is most sensibly perceived. Adults live in all the smoke and impurity, and as we, who are here, can testify, they manage to do pretty well. But that smoke and that impure atmosphere tell principally upon infants and children under five years old.

There is no better test of pure air than whether a child can live and thrive in it; and if you want to know what the air we are all living in really is, go and look in any of the parks; you will see there that, notwithstanding constant care and attention, and an outlay which is practically unlimited, you can only get a few of the hardier kinds of trees to grow and to flourish at all. Now, I do not think it requires much reasoning to prove that an atmosphere which will kill an oak is not likely to be healthy to a child. Add to that—it is an evil, of course, that affects children in all ranks, the children in the richer classes escape it by artificial means, and because they are not always kept within reach of these unsanitary influences—add to that, in the case of the poor, habitual overcrowding, frequent want of work in the poorest class, want of proper care and nursing in illness, not from neglect, not from indifference, but partly from sheer ignorance, and partly from an absolute want of the necessary appliances. Consider all these things, and the case seems to be completely made in favour of an institution such as that which we are supporting.

I have often been engaged in sanitary discussions, and I have found some people argue that if you were to lower the death-rate in London to what it is in the healthiest parts of the country, supposing that possible, you would find that we

had only averted one evil in order to produce another, and that we should be getting overdone with a population growing up for which we could not find employment. Of course, that is a serious consideration, and I do not wish to treat it with contempt; but I do not share in that fear, for this reason, that though undoubtedly the opportunities of employment at home are limited, still there is this to be remembered, that we are peculiarly—above all nations in the world—the one nation which has established emigration as a custom. And as our labouring class become more and more instructed, as they become more wide awake, more conscious of what is passing around them, and less limited in their observation to the sphere of their own village, in proportion to that will the attraction of a new country become stronger, and the amount of emigration tend to increase. We have seen what it is in Ireland, where, by the latest returns that I have been able to obtain, notwithstanding the general prosperity—for I believe the times never were better—the exodus, the outflow more than balances the natural increase of population; and that population is, at the present time at least, stationary, and I believe to some small extent diminishing.

It would not surprise me if the same thing were to take place here, because certainly when one looks at the advantages which a new country offers to an energetic man in the poorer class, one's wonder is not that there are so many found to go, but that there are so many found to stay behind. I have just noticed that, because it answers the only serious objection which I have ever heard brought against all these various sanitary movements, of which this is one, for increasing the health and longevity of the population.

I have said enough on the general subject; as to this particular institution I have only one or two facts to lay before you. Its progress has been gradual, and not at first very rapid. I suppose the period of infancy for the hospital, as for its inmates, was the most trying time; but slow growth means slow decay. The most gradual growth is generally the surest, and the progress of this institution

has been steady and continuous. . . . I will give you one thought, if it has not occurred to you already, to carry away. We talk—people have been talking very loudly in the last few months—about the waste of lives in war; I wonder to how many people it has occurred, what is the waste of lives in peace? I doubt if the most sanguinary battle that ever was fought in ancient or modern history has carried off nearly as many human beings as die in England in one year from purely preventable causes.

Now, that is the state of things around us; of course we cannot change it in a day, but we can modify it. This institution, of course, can do but little; it is only one among many, but it is one of a thousand agencies which earnest and philanthropic men are bringing to bear for the purpose of remedying this great evil. It is, of course, utterly inadequate. You can judge for yourselves what 200 patients at a time, say at the utmost 800 or 1,000 in a year, are among three millions of the population; still it is a beginning, and a beginning is better than nothing. I appeal to you, therefore, to support it, and I say that if you do you will find that your time, your trouble, your sympathy, your money, have not been thrown away. I ask you to support it on the grounds that, looking at it from a charitable point of view, you will have done good to those whom you relieve, that, looking at it from a social point of view, you will have done good to the community as a whole, and that, looking at it from a moral point of view, you will have done best of all for yourselves.

XX

THE ORGANISATION OF CHARITY

MEETING OF SOCIETY FOR ORGANISING CHARITABLE RELIEF AND REPRESSING MENDICITY. LONDON: MARCH 22, 1871

I VERY much regret, both on your account and my own, that the chair this afternoon is not to be occupied by one of those gentlemen who have been principally engaged in the operations of the Society; but they being, from various causes, unable to attend here, have asked me to take their place, and I willingly consented, because I think now, as I did last year, that the Society is one much needed, and capable, if it receives a fair share of support in its operations, and is directed with a fair share of judgment and good sense, of helping very materially to remove some of the scandals which we cannot help observing in this vast city.

I do not want to go more than I can help over the ground traversed in our meeting last year, but I must remind you of the general principles upon which this Society is formed. We believe that there is in London charity enough and wealth enough to put an end to all the undeserved distress, if it could only be applied in the right direction. Whatever may be our national faults (and they are a good deal talked about just now), parsimony is not one of them; people are willing enough to give, but they like to give in their own way, and they are not easily persuaded that their own way is not always the best one; and it so happens that, instead of the harmony which you ought to have, you have what is popularly called a Dutch concert, every man playing his own tune on his own instrument, or, if I may use a more dignified simile, that charity is apt to fall in London much the same as rain falls

in tropical countries, at one season a drought, and at another a deluge, the excessive supply in the latter being nearly as bad as the absence of supply in the former.

I will not go into figures; though for my own part I am convinced that the majority of calculations that have been made on the subject are near to the mark; but this much I will venture to affirm, that the money given in charity is enough effectually to supplement the action of the Poor Law if it could only be turned into the right channel, but a great deal of money is not so directed. Now, I say it happens that you have on the one hand painful and miserable cases of people starving, and generally these are people who have known better days, and are ashamed to let their state be known; and, on the other, you have a tribe of rascally impostors, who will do anything rather than work, and who get what is in many cases a comfortable living out of the credulity and fears of the public. I am afraid it is not uncommon for men and women who begin by applying for help in cases of real difficulty to become more and more averse to working for themselves, until at last the very idea is dropped, and they become professional beggars. Now, we wish, among other and higher objects, to spoil the trade of these persons. It is a mistake to fancy that they do no great harm, as we hear people say, because they only get their living at the expense of the rich. That is not so; they get their living at the expense of the poor.

Again, those who have been often duped are apt to harden themselves against appeals, and so the innocent suffer for the guilty. Our aim is, so far as we can, to provide people (who wish to do their duty to the poor by giving, but at the same time wish to give usefully) with the means of discrimination in such cases, and thus prevent what may be called the misdirection of charity. I heard only the other day of an old lady well to do, and very benevolent, who made it a regular practice to distribute alms to the amount of several hundreds of pounds a year in some particular courts, and this became so perfectly well known among the inhabitants of the courts in

question, and was so much taken advantage of, that the landlords were able to get one shilling a week more from them than from houses in the courts elsewhere. There are cases in which, perhaps, no very bad result follows, but there are instances where money indiscriminately given finds its way into the pockets of those who do not ask for it, who do not want it, and who do not deserve it.

There is another kindred abuse which has outlived its period of utility; for instance, the law is so arranged that ample provision is made for beggars who want a night's lodging, and it may be doubted whether this will serve any purpose beyond encouraging vagrancy. You cannot put out your hand to assist impostors, and assistance cannot therefore be rendered until you have established an effective machinery for giving help where it is really wanted. I must confess that I would rather give to a dozen beggars in succession than run any risk of starving a man for want of a shilling; but we must have a better system than this. Tickets are obviously one resource, but the main point is that there should be places not far distant from the principal centres of population whither the applicant may go and have his immediate wants relieved to prevent him from starving, and where his case may be inquired into. With a machinery of this kind tramps and professional beggars will soon take themselves off.

The wish and endeavour of this Society have been to form district committees in every part of London so that every possible facility for mutual reference may be given. This has been done to some extent in the districts of Marylebone, Clapham, and Paddington, and I am told that a beginning has been made in St. Giles's, St. Pancras, Kilburn, Bethnal Green, and several other places. In St. James's we have not been idle, and I hope we shall establish a local centre there. Perhaps the best explanation I can give you of the working of this committee is that the cases of imposture, or something very like it, amounted in Clapham to 20 per cent., in Paddington to 20 per cent., and in Marylebone to 27 per cent. I just recall this to show you that the abuse of which

I have been speaking is not an imaginary one, and you must also recollect that you have here only a portion, and not the whole. I will ask you to bear in mind that the life of the labouring man is far from being an easy one; he has much to endure and go through as a rule, though he does it with wonderful patience; but there is one thing which will demoralise any population, and that is to see that idleness and dishonesty pay better than respectability.

We have heard lately of a section of the London working men that prefers to have occasional jobs, and beggary here, rather than to earn high wages out of town, and I believe it is a fact that some of those who have been assisted to get away have found their way back again. Now, before I sit down I will advert to some objections which were made when the subject was brought before the public last year. There is nothing which checks benevolence so much as the suspicion of being imposed upon. It operates in two ways: it is an excuse to those who want one, to let their charity end at home, where it very often begins; and it causes others to give recklessly, and without inquiry, because they say they may as well give to the wrong persons as neglect the deserving. The clergy, who have much to do with the poor, have entered willingly into this scheme of organisation. They know the want of it, and see the use of it; but there are some ministers who are unwilling to lose their control of their charitable funds. Of course, they do not like to part with their patronage, and they say that the little gifts which they have to dispose of are of use in drawing people to the church. Now, I cannot help thinking that the gifts are out of place in this way, and tend rather to make humbugs and hypocrites than honest men. The Society is very young yet, and we, its promoters, do not ask the public to place implicit faith in us, or to take everything on our unsupported authority; we only ask that our operations may be fairly judged, and a fair start given us, and the rest we will do for ourselves. I am very far from having put this case fully before you, and have merely given you an outline of it. I hope those that follow will supply my deficiencies.

XXI

OVERCROWDING OF A LARGE SEAPORT — NEED FOR HEALTHY HOMES — MANAGEMENT OF IMPROVED DWELLINGS FOR THE WORKING CLASSES

LIVERPOOL: JUNE 1, 1871

I HAVE had great pleasure in accepting the invitation given me to take the chair on this occasion, because we have not met for the purpose of merely letting off oratorical fireworks, or of promulgating any of those new social or political theories of which there is just now so abundant a supply in the market; nor yet with the view of celebrating or of bringing about the triumph of any party in Church or State. All these things may be excellent in their way, but our object is one of a more definite and restricted character. We know what we want, and we think we know how to do it. We are all, unfortunately, too well acquainted with the sanitary and social condition of a large part of this town. Taking Liverpool as a whole, and adopting no very high standard of comparison, our deaths are at least 10 per 1,000 yearly more numerous than they ought to be or need be. In a population of nearly half a million you can calculate for yourselves what is the waste of life represented by these figures. It would be bad enough if it was equally distributed over the town, but it is not equally distributed. It is concentrated in a few districts, inhabited mostly by the poorest part of the population, and in those districts the amount of preventable mortality is larger than would be endurable to reflect upon, but for the consideration that the state of things which it indicates need not and will not continue.

Now, to what is that mortality owing? Not, certainly, to any natural defects in the climate or situation of Liverpool. We have great sanitary advantages here if we know how to use them—a soil generally pervious of wet and not retaining it, a conformation of ground favourable to drainage, ample ventilation caused by the neighbourhood of the sea, and a broad river—indeed, during some parts of the year we have rather more of it than we could wish, especially those who cross the Mersey. We are not altogether free from smoke; but as compared with Wigan or St. Helens, or most of the towns situated on the coal-fields, Liverpool is relatively free and pure. We have not such an enormous aggregation of dilapidated streets as is to be found in the centre and the east of London; we have money to pay for improvements, and, what is quite as important, we are ready to spend it. This is the favourable side of the question. Now turn over the page, and see what are our drawbacks in a sanitary point of view.

In the first place, we are a great seaport, and, for reasons which everybody understands, a great seaport has a peculiar tendency to gather about it an undesirable kind of population. Life on board ship is necessarily one of peculiar restraint, all artificial restraint produces a corresponding reaction, and so it comes that a sailor just landed, with money in his pocket, and long deprived of female society, is given to ways for which neither his health nor his pocket are the better. A good deal has been done, and a good deal more may be done, to increase the comfort of the seafaring population. But all changes of that kind are slow and gradual in their effect, and meanwhile we have to take men, and women too, as we find them. Then we have our friends from Ireland. I should be sorry to utter one word to hurt their feelings, and all persons interested in this town must acknowledge the value of the cheap and abundant supply of labour which they furnish; but I believe that there is no doubt that much of the overcrowding from which we are suffering began at the time of the Irish famine, when thousands in a half-starved condition crossed the Channel and settled here, either unable or unwilling to go further; and,

lastly, we have a considerable number of persons, either English or Irish, whose employment depends upon the state of trade and the amount of shipping in port, who earn but little at the best of times, and live from hand to mouth, and whom, therefore, a few months of commercial depression throw into a state of absolute destitution.

There is another inconvenience which we share with every other large town in these parts. Liverpool is a place where a good deal of money is made, often very rapidly, and from which those who have made it generally migrate to less busy and more picturesque parts of the country. I am far from denying that there have been and are amongst us splendid examples of munificence and public spirit; but it is obvious that a town is at some disadvantage when the majority of its richer inhabitants regard it rather as a temporary place of business than as a residence for themselves and their descendants. With all these facts before us, and I think I have stated them fairly, we have to ask ourselves—first, What are the causes of this excessive disease and mortality? And, next, How are we to find a remedy? The causes, I think, are few and simple—overcrowding, drunkenness, and immorality; and among a certain class a want of a sufficiency of wholesome food. I say nothing of the temporary mischief produced by epidemics, except so far as they are aggravated by unfavourable physical conditions; nor do I touch upon the subject of drunkenness, because that is not before us, except from this point of view—that if a man or a woman has to live in a hole where cleanliness and decency are impossible, you must not wonder if they try to drown—I will not call it their misery, but their discomfort, in drink.

There is a kind of action and reaction in this matter. Crowded lodgings and poisoned air produce the craving for stimulants, and drunken habits keep the family from ever moving into a more respectable home. I hear many people say, 'Oh, education will set all that right.' Now, I am as warm a friend to popular education as any one, but I am not quite so sanguine. If a man is placed in a position where

moderately pure air is unattainable, and self-respect almost impossible, it is not being able to read and write that will keep him out of the gin-shop. I am not arguing in disparagement of either educational teaching or of that direct preaching of temperance—or, rather, abstinence—upon which many people rely. It is well that the evil we have to fight against should be attacked from many points at once; but I believe that if it were possible that every man, woman, and child in Liverpool should have a clean, wholesome, and decent lodging, you would have struck a heavier blow at intemperance than could be struck by all the School Boards and all the teetotal gatherings in England put together. Of course, I do not argue that, even under these conditions, the effect would be immediate. All changes where human habits and character are concerned are slow in operation. But that is a point of less practical importance, because, do what we may, we can only provide accommodation for comparatively few at a time, and by a kind of process of natural selection the model lodger would be the first to find out and to use the model lodging.

I have not troubled you with statistics of the overcrowding which exists in this town, because I am speaking to a Liverpool audience, and suppose the fact that overcrowding does prevail to an enormous extent, and has done so since the days of the Irish famine, will not be disputed. Dr. Trench, who has the best means of information at his command, tells you that about 25,000 houses are occupied by families in single rooms. That is, in plain words, that their inmates are living under conditions necessarily unhealthy, and hardly consistent with decency. That is a computation founded upon the inquiries of the Health Committee. If you take only the average of six persons to a house, which is that of Liverpool as a whole, and, therefore, probably below that of the poorer classes in Liverpool, you have 150,000 persons, or a third of the whole population, in this unsatisfactory position. It is quite clear that that is not an arrangement which can be allowed to continue longer than we can help. But how are we to deal with it? There are only two things to do—to

build fresh houses, and to get hold of and improve the best of the old. There is no antagonism between these two methods of proceeding. They have been combined, and successfully combined, by many societies. The doubt has always been, can you do this work so as to make it pay a fair or even a moderate return as an investment? And, if I had been arguing upon this subject twenty or even fifteen years ago, I must in fairness have admitted that that result had not been obtained. The earlier experiments were not commercially a success, if they could even be said to have succeeded in any sense. They gave returns of 2½, of 2, very rarely of 3 per cent.; and, of course, subscribing to them on those terms was merely giving money away in charity. But later results have been very different.

I am a member of five or six different societies of this kind. The largest—the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company—pays a steady dividend of 5 per cent., putting by, at the same time, an ample fund for repairs and casualties. The London Labourers' Dwellings Company also pays 5 per cent. The Hastings Cottage Society—a provincial experiment on a smaller scale—has hitherto done the same I speak only of those which I know well. There are many others; and I do not cite the case of the Peabody Trust, though I have had a good deal to do with its working, because, being what is called a charity, it began by giving rather better accommodation than the rents charged would have warranted from a commercial point of view. On the whole, it may be taken as proved that, with ordinary good and economical management, a return of 5 per cent. in average years can be got from investments of this kind without either giving less in the way of accommodation than health and decency require, or, on the other hand, asking more than the working class are willing to pay, and actually do pay, for the wretched hovels they live in now. No doubt there may be periods of general distress when the receipts will be lower, but that contingency ought to be guarded against by a reserve fund.

Now, I do not contend that the return I spoke of would

tempt a speculator, or that better investments may not be found; but if a man can get 5 per cent., or even 4½ or 4 per cent., with scarcely any risk of losing the principal, and, at the same time, have the satisfaction of knowing that he is helping on a good work, it seems to me that he might do worse with his savings, both for his pocket and his conscience. There are two rocks to steer clear of in the business we have before us. One is wasteful and unnecessary outlay in putting your scheme before the world. I have no faith in puffing. Where you see a long bill for advertisements and public meetings and charges of that kind, you may suspect either that there has been jobbery at work, or else that certain individuals are more anxious to keep themselves before the public than to do their work in a quiet and effective way. The other danger to guard against is, when you have got your buildings occupied, not to drive people from them by unnecessary meddling. Everybody knows the intense dislike of those whom we call the poorer classes to be interfered with, or done good to in an ostentatious way. I think they are quite right, and that in the same position we should feel as they do. When a number of people lodge in one building you must have some rules for the maintenance of order and decency, but they cannot be too few or too simple; and, above all, do not let there be any feeling of obligation on the side of the occupiers. Make it simply a matter of business, without favour granted or thanks expected, else your dwellings become only magnified almshouses, those who go into them are paupers, and the best of those whom you want to attract stay away.

Only one word more. Objection has been taken to this movement on the ground that the means employed are inadequate to the object. My answer is, that depends on the spirit in which it is taken up. If we cannot do all that we could wish, we can at least set an example and make a beginning, and it is to my mind vitally essential that the work we have in hand should be done by private enterprise. Either it will pay or it will not. If it will, there is no need to call

on any public authority to help us. If it will not—but that is an hypothesis I do not accept for an instant—it is no light matter to require the local governing body of the town to provide homes for the poor at less than their cost price. You would by that course be sanctioning a principle of which it is not easy to see how or where you could limit the application. For if a poor man, not being a pauper, has a right to be supplied with lodging at less than it costs, why not the food also?—the one is as necessary as the other—and then you come to what would be nothing less than a system of universal outdoor relief. I only indicate the difficulties of that alternative. By voluntary action we avoid them altogether. It is to voluntary action, to individual and collective effort, that we appeal; and, for the honour of Liverpool and the welfare of its inhabitants, I hope and I believe that we shall not fail.

XXII

AGRICULTURE—GAME LAWS—SALE OF LAND

Annual Dinner of the Manchester and Liverpool Agricultural Society
Liverpool: September 5, 1871

It is not necessary that I should stop to argue the question as to the usefulness of societies of this kind. Experience has decided that matter for us. There is hardly a parish in England which does not help to support one; and in these parts, so far from their falling off, the tendency is rather to multiply them to excess. Their object is, in one word, to show the farmer how to make the most of his land. Now, if there is one thing more certain than another, it is this, that where farming has to be applied to a limited area like that of England, where an acre costs more than a square mile in some countries, it can only be made to answer—foreign competition and home competition, too, can only be met—by the combination of chemical and mechanical appliances, requiring some capital to attain them and some knowledge to manage them. Of course a man may go on after the fashion of the Irish cottiers, scratching the earth for a bare subsistence—but that is not farming; and I am only repeating an opinion which I have expressed before, and which I hold very strongly, when I say that the cottier, the peasant cultivator—honest and industrious and frugal as he may be—has just as much chance of holding his own against the combination of capital and science as bows and arrows have of superseding breechloading rifles, or hand-loom weaving of driving the power-loom out of the field. And do not let any one imagine that this question of skilled or unskilled farming is a small one.

It may very well be that the enormous wealth due to manufactures and commerce, the wealth which is represented by 200 millions yearly of British exports, the wealth for which we lay the whole world under contribution, should make us comparatively indifferent to what we get out of the soil, and, apart from that, there is a claim which may be put forward, and which, within fair limits, is a very reasonable claim, for the preservation of a moderate proportion of our little island for purposes of beauty and enjoyment, whether to the owners or to the public. High farming is apt not to be picturesque, and some sacrifices of profit may reasonably be made in the interest of that kind of taste which we all desire to see more and more extended. But, after setting apart all that, on a liberal allowance, can be required for that purpose, the fact still remains that we do not get, as yet, out of English earth one half of what we probably might if all our present resources were brought to bear on the soil.

No doubt there has been, and there is, great improvement. We hear talk now and then about the reclamation of waste lands, and men endeavour to raise a cry on that subject. Why, ever since I can remember, we have been reclaiming our waste lands in Lancashire without any fuss or noise about it, and in half a century we have pretty well succeeded in changing the face of the country; and if any one complains that this process of improvement does not go on fast enough, they must remember that in the nature of the case, where tenant farmers are concerned, it must be a gradual one.

There are other besides economical considerations which affect us. We may wish that all our tenants had capital and science and energy, but I think that very few landlords would choose to lay it down as a principle that any one not possessing these qualifications should be turned off from a farm on which he and his fathers before him may have lived. We want to move on, but we want also, if possible, to move on together—to live and let live—not for a few to make fortunes,

while the rest go to the dogs: and I will add that if this work of agricultural improvement is to be carried on as it should be, it is the landlord quite as much as the farmer who must put his shoulder to the wheel. It may be said that he has not very often the capital required. I believe that what is wanted from the landlord is much less that he should put a large amount of capital of his own on to the soil—though, of course, that is desirable—than that he should offer no obstacle to its being put on by the tenant.

Security is the first requisite, and I hold that any tenant good enough to be kept permanently on the land ought to have a lease if he wants one. I say 'kept permanently,' because there are, of course, cases where tenants are retained from kindly feelings, though not very fit to do justice to their farms, and in such cases the landlord may reasonably desire some check upon mismanagement. As to conditions of letting, they would vary in different places, but I have not altered the opinion which I expressed some years ago, that as a rule they ought to be few and simple. If a man is not able or willing to do the work, he is in the wrong place, and would be better away, though I admit that, in practice, you cannot always act upon that view. If he is fit for his business, he will probably do it best in his own way.

Then there is that ticklish question of game—a word I am almost afraid of uttering on such an occasion, though I do not think I shall have anything to say upon it that can provoke controversy. I have always thought it a question which, with moderation and good sense on both sides, ought not to give trouble. Nobody can doubt that there is a great deal of over-preserving in England, and that in some places it has been carried so far as to amount to a public nuisance; and, when that is the case, I hold that what is in fault is not the love of sport, but a love of ostentation and display, and it can hardly assume a more objectionable shape. We are told that there is to be some legislation on the subject. Now, personally, I am not a very keen sportsman, and I shall acquiesce heartily in whatever Parliament may decide: but I

would just point out that it is possible for you to go so far as to defeat your own object. The absolute sweeping away of the power of keeping game on farms, however brought about, would, of course, imply, under their changed conditions, a general revaluation for rents, and by that operation the tenant would certainly not be a gainer; while in other cases it might probably lead to this—the rich men, fond of their sport, and willing to make sacrifices in order to keep it, would take more and more of their estates into their own hands in order to enjoy their amusement undisturbed. That would not be an arrangement, I think, for the benefit of any party.

One thing, I think, the tenant really has, in many cases, to complain of, and that is the difficulty of making a fair bargain with his landlord where game is concerned; because, not knowing what the quantity of it will be, he cannot form an estimate beforehand as to the probability of loss. If that can be remedied—and I do not see why it should not be—I cannot see that there is any injustice or grievance remaining so far as that is concerned.

I ought to apologise for the length at which I am detaining you, but there is a far wider and graver question which many have for years past been discussing at public meetings, and which I do not like to leave entirely untouched—I mean the question of ownership of the soil. I have but little to trouble you with in regard to it, and I shall carefully avoid touching on anything that can be considered political ground. What I most wish to point out is the curious uncertainty as to the facts of the case in which we are, and the expediency of doing something to have that uncertainty removed. I have seen it repeated again and again that the whole soil of these islands is in the hands of less than 30,000 persons, but it is perfectly well known to every one much interested in such matters that that assertion rests on a mere mistake—on the misreading of a statement made in the Census of 1861. In that Census only about 30,000 persons returned themselves under the head of landowners, the great majority who held

land having entered themselves, as they were free to do, under other designations; and the best proof of the fallacy of the figures is this—that 15,000 out of the whole so returned were women. We know that half the land is not in female hands, and that probably not one-tenth of our landowners, if so many, are women. I will not set guess against guess; but, if I were compelled to do so, I should say you might multiply the figures I have given of 30,000 by ten at least, and still be below the mark.

Another fallacy constantly repeated, and which I can with similar confidence contradict, even from my own limited experience, is that it is a very difficult matter for any one to buy a landed estate, that land is so locked up that it cannot be brought into the market. Now, inasmuch as people having estates to sell are fond of pressing them on the notice of those whom they suppose may wish to buy, I have some personal knowledge of that matter, and I affirm with confidence that there is at this moment hardly a county in England where a man looking for a landed investment cannot find what he wants. If it were otherwise, we should have plenty of complaints from the capitalists of these parts; but the fact is, I believe, that at the present time there are, of the two, more sellers than buyers.

We live in days of change. There are a great many people who prefer to have their property where they can, at a few hours' notice, move it to any part of the world, and that is a feeling more likely to increase than diminish. It may be the fact—I believe it is—that a man who wants only a few acres does not always find it easy to buy them; but if there is any real demand for small freeholds, surely it would be worth the while of speculators to buy up large estates as they come into the market, and to sell them again piecemeal. If that is not done, the only reason can be that it does not pay. Then there is another notion afloat—that estates are constantly tending to become fewer in number and bigger in size. That is a point on which no man's observation can be wide enough to enable him to speak with certainty; but I

greatly doubt whether the fact is so. Some large estates, no doubt, are growing, but many also break up, and the one process probably balances the other. Near great towns, especially near London, there is certainly, as a rule, more of disruption than of accumulation.

My belief is—though I give it only as a thing which seems to me probable, not as a thing proved—that both very great and very small properties are becoming fewer, and those of a middle size more numerous. Poor landowners prefer 10 per cent. in trade to 2 per cent. from land—they sell and go into business; and, on the other hand, there is a limit beyond which most men do not desire to extend their holding of what is essentially an unremunerative investment. But why should we be left on this subject to mere speculation? Is it impossible to get at the facts? Is a Domesday Book more difficult now than in the days of the Conqueror? If what is called the Land question is to come to the front, as I suppose it will, surely we ought to discuss it with as much positive knowledge as we can bring to bear. I am not insensible—no man who keeps his eyes open can be so—to the value, in a social point of view, of having a numerous body of men concerned in land-owning. My contention is only this, that the supply of land in the market fully equals the present demand, and that the popular theory that it is so locked up that nobody can buy does not rest on a solid foundation.

XXIII

THE ORPHAN CHILDREN OF SEAMEN—THEIR CLAIMS ON THE COMMUNITY

On the Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution. Liverpool: September 11, 1871

I have accepted with great pleasure the invitation which was sent me to attend on the occasion of this interesting ceremony, and, having done so, I cannot refuse to comply with the request which has been addressed to me, that I would say a few words on this occasion, not of the founding of this admirable institution, but upon the occasion of our giving it a new home, a fresh start, and, as we hope, an enlarged and increased sphere of utility. But I must confess that I undertake this duty with some feeling of reluctance—partly because I know that, do what I will, I cannot hope to make myself heard by more than a small portion of the vast audience which I am addressing; partly also because, although it is to any public speaker an awkward and a disagreeable casualty to find himself compelled to argue in a weak or a bad cause—and I am afraid that is a casualty which, at one time or another, has befallen most public speakers—there is one thing yet more difficult, and that is to stand up and argue in favour of a proposition which no man in the possession of his senses will think of disputing.

The counsel who is retained in a hopeless cause may console himself by the display of his own ingenuity, although he perfectly well knows that nothing will come of it; but I defy any man, whatever his gifts of argument or of speech may be, to be very original or very interesting, or, in fact, to

be anything but commonplace, when he knows perfectly well that those whom it is his duty to convince are convinced already, and that every one of his audience knows just as well as he does everything there is to say upon the subject. A writer in verse said long ago,—

> Men should be taught as though you taught them not,
> And things unknown advanced as things forgot.

But the ideas which it is my office to enforce and to impress upon you here are certainly not unknown, and I do not think that, either in theory or in practice, they have been, or are likely to be, forgotten.

We have our national faults like all other countries, but among them a want of liberality in money matters never has been included. I do not suppose that there is any age or country in which men have been in the habit of voluntarily taxing themselves for a public, or patriotic, or charitable purpose to the extent which is customary among Englishmen of the present day. Wherever we hear of wrong, or suffering, or degradation, or anything else which we believe to be wrong, and which we think ought to be remedied, the first impulse of a well-to-do Englishman is to pull out his cheque-book, write a cheque, and relieve his feelings by giving it to somebody. I am afraid I must add that he does not always particularly trouble himself to inquire into whose hands it passes or who is likely to be the better for it.

It is not only among ourselves that we do these things. The funds raised last year for the sufferers by the Continental War exceeded half a million; and at the present moment I see advertised in our newspapers, among other things, one fund for the relief of victims of pestilence at Buenos Ayres, and another for assistance to those who suffer by famine in Persia. That world-wide benevolence, though it may sometimes be perverted or abused, is a feeling which we all respect and desire to encourage, and, on my part, if I quote the old saying, that 'Charity ought to begin at home,' I do not at all mean to imply that it ought to end there. But

I do say that it is an additional recommendation to this enterprise that the money which the promoters of it ask for will be spent among our own people. It will not be eaten up in advertisements, in secretaries' salaries, in charity dinners, in preliminary expenses of all kinds, of which we find a great deal too much. It will go direct to those for whom it is intended, and they are persons who have upon us a double claim—a claim inasmuch as we are English men and English women, and a claim upon us also inasmuch as we are the inhabitants of the greatest seaport, except one, in these islands.

What is it and who is it that have made Liverpool what we see Liverpool to-day? We have over half a million of population, we have docks absolutely unequalled in the world, we have a river upon which with those docks we have spent already upwards of twenty millions of money. We have not done yet, and I can show you some people here who think we are only beginning. We have in our streets, among, unhappily, much that is poor and mean and squalid, some of the noblest examples of modern architecture which are to be found in any part of this kingdom. And to whom do we owe these things? Assuredly not to any one class exclusively. The merchant and the shipowner among ourselves; the manufacturers of the inland towns; the foreign and colonial customers with whom we deal have all contributed their share to that great result. They may claim their share in it, but they must not claim the whole.

Capital has done much, but labour has done its part also; and of all labour there is none to which we, as a community here, are more indebted, or in regard to which we ought to be more willing to pay back some part of that debt, than to the sailor of the merchant service. Look for a moment what his life is. I do not say, and I do not believe, that our great shipowners fail in any way in making due provision for his health and comforts. I believe that in that respect, as a class, they do their duty, and do it well. But, at the best, a sailor's is a way of life which involves absence from home and

family during at least two-thirds of a man's time; it involves poor and crowded lodgings—for space is precious even in the best ship—it involves peculiar tendencies to irregular and reckless living in rare intervals of duty, and when on duty it involves exposure to dangers which no human skill, or care, or science can always avert. I speak only of what is inevitable. I do not care to talk of preventable abuses, such as, no doubt, will be put an end to; but I am afraid that no care, no skill, and no sympathy can make the sailor's life other than hard and precarious.

We have in merchant vessels, I believe, some 200,000 seamen; and in one of the official papers circulated in connection with this institution I find it is stated that in one single year—in 1866—no less than 2,300 of these died by drowning. I have not myself verified that statement, but I suppose it is authentic; and if it is in any way a fair representation of the state of the case, I leave you to judge what a mass of orphan children, year after year, must be thrown upon society. Now, what is to become of them? They are paupers by no fault of their own or of their parents. When it happens that a man goes to the bad—drinks himself to death or anything of that sort—and leaves those dependent upon him destitute, we say, and perhaps with some justice, 'It is hard upon them, but after all the fault lies with the father.' But here there is no blame and there is no fault. These orphans are orphans of men who died in the discharge of their duty, and who out of their limited wages cannot, in the great majority of cases, especially if they are cut off in early life, make any effectual provision for their families.

I say that to save these children from the workhouse or from the streets is not merely an act of charity, it is an act of duty and of justice. You can never tell what may have been the feelings of many a poor fellow in his last moments when going down in some ship which has disappeared at sea—no one knows where or when—in thinking of what is harder to bear than any mere personal suffering—of a widow and children left behind without means and without private friends

to fight their own way in the world. There is no question here, such as often arises in these cases, of pauperising by injudicious relief. The man who has given his life in the struggle to support his family and himself in independence can give no more. He has done his duty. He has done what he can for them and for you. It is your turn now. Do what you can, not for him—he is beyond the reach alike of kindness and neglect—but for those to maintain whom in comfort he has faced hardship and danger—hardship which, to those who come after him, will be more endurable—danger which will have lost its greatest and its real terror, when those who in future are called to encounter it will know that, in the worst event, whatever sympathy and kindness and humanity can do will be done to save from destitution those whom they leave behind.

I congratulate you upon having laid the first stone of a building which will be alike an ornament to your town, an honour to your munificence and public spirit, and a standing proof that in England the claims of poverty and of suffering are not passed by unnoticed.

XXIV

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

BIRKENHEAD: SEPTEMBER 27, 1871

I CANNOT refuse to comply with the request that has been addressed to me, that I should say a few words on the occasion of the opening of the School of Science and Art. Private wealth is never better employed than in the founding and maintenance of useful local institutions; and when the wealth so used is the result of personal energy and enterprise in business matters, we feel a double satisfaction—first, in seeing that those qualities have brought their appropriate reward, and, next, in seeing that what has been liberally gained is freely and worthily expended. I need not tell you that it is to Mr. Laird alone that Birkenhead owes the gift of this building, as well as of its site, and I think that the fact that the sum of 1,100*l.* required for furnishing and as a fund to provide for future repairs has been raised in a short time, without trouble, indicates a disposition on the part of the inhabitants of this borough to appreciate and to use the advantages which are placed in their hands. [The speaker then gave some figures as to the work of the School.] And let me tell you that this School of Art and all similar institutions in these parts will have to grow, if they are to keep pace with the increase of that vast industrial community on both shores of the Mersey, of which Liverpool and Birkenhead are component parts.

We have had five years, not exactly of scarcity, and certainly not of idleness, but years in which Lancashire was

not as busy as Lancashire usually is. They are passed, and the usual reaction has followed; and in most branches of industry we are doing as well, I suppose, as we ever did before. Experience teaches us, however, that that also is a condition of things which will pass away; and experience is teaching us another disagreeable truth—that we have more to fear from foreign competition in all occupations for which technical or artistic skill is required than we had fifteen or twenty years ago, or than we are willing to admit at the present day.

We have been making a great noise about teaching everybody to read, write, and cipher, and of course that is all as it should be; but book learning is, after all, but a small part of the practical education of life. What is called special or technical training is growing into greater importance every year, and for a very obvious reason. As civilisation goes on, as mechanical skill and scientific knowledge increase in importance, and at the same time become more widely diffused, the tendency in every art, in every branch of production, is to adopt more complex processes and more labour-saving devices; and these more and more require men who have been specially and carefully taught to manage them. The fewer human beings you want in order to produce with such help as you can borrow from Nature a given result, the better as a general rule must be their training to meet the greater difficulty and delicacy of the operations they are engaged in. Now, this training may be got after a fashion by practice only; but it is most perfectly and thoroughly attained by a combination of practice with theoretical instruction; and accordingly in various and very different professions you see the want of a special professional course of teaching recognised.

The naval and military colleges about which there is so much talk just now, the establishment which is to train engineers for India, the College of Naval Architecture, the School of Mines in London, the schools under the Science and Art Department, the Agricultural College in the West of England—which I heartly hope will find imitators elsewhere —are all cases in point. They all start from the same leading

idea, that if a young man is there to learn his business thoroughly, and if that business is one of a complicated or difficult nature, he will understand it best by being instructed more or less, according as his capacity may be, in the theory of what he is doing, instead of being left either to pick it up by chance hints from friends, or to do without it altogether, and work by rule of thumb exclusively. To rely on theory only is like learning to swim on dry land; to rely on practice only is like learning to swim by jumping into the water without any one to show you what the attitude and motions of a swimmer should be. Now, so far as practice goes, we in England can hold our own fairly with our neighbours; but, if one may trust the reports of those who ought to know best, the other part of English training is very scantily supplied.

I was reading the other day an interesting work by Mr. Scott Russell upon this subject published two years ago. He may, perhaps, overstate his case—I hope he does; but it is not a pleasant statement for an Englishman to read. When we are told that in the Exhibition of 1867 at Paris we, as a nation, were beaten 'by some nation or other on nearly all the points on which we had prided ourselves'—that we were rivalled, if not surpassed, even in such articles as steam-engines—that, notwithstanding the greater cost of material abroad, foreign work in iron and steel is imported here because its quality can be more certainly and safely relied on—when one of the jurors at the Exhibition of 1867 tells you that with regard to locomotives and railway works 'our former superiority, whether in material or workmanship, no longer exists'—when Professor Franklin says that in the different branches of chemical manufacture, his special subject, 'foreign superiority in training is more than counterbalancing the advantages which this country possesses in raw material'—when these things are asserted on what seems to be competent testimony—and I am only picking a few samples, almost at random, out of a mass of evidence of the same kind which is on record—I think it is impossible not to feel that, though some of these judgments as to the present, and apprehensions

as to the future, may be exaggerated, they are, taken altogether, too serious and too well vouched for to be treated with neglect. In matters of art especially this superiority of foreign and especially of French industry is recognised. One of those skilled witnesses who reported at the Paris Exhibition puts the case so briefly and strongly that I must quote his words:—

'The Frenchman's familiarity with art, and his early training in its principles, enable him to outstrip us. You are at a loss to know where they get all the art workmen, but the difficulty would not appear so great if you could read the large placards which are posted up in public places, informing workmen where they can be taught drawing and modelling every evening free of expense. If English workmen are behind in this respect it is not because art genius is deficient in our nature, but because it is not developed and encouraged sufficiently. It is impossible to estimate the loss which is entailed upon England through the neglect of art culture in every department of our industry, through which we are reduced to mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for other nations.'

And what this witness says is substantially confirmed with hardly an exception—indeed, with no exception of importance—by fifty others, similarly reporting on their own branches of business. This is for us a very serious matter. Our national prosperity, great as it is, rests on a more artificial basis than that of most countries. We do not even feed our people from our own soil. America has its boundless territory; France has double our area and a better climate. These are advantages which cannot be lost; but our natural wealth is drawn mainly from trade and manufactures, and we all know by the experience of Holland and the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages—not to go back to more remote dates—how these may pass from one country to another. We can only keep them by successful competition with our neighbours, and it is not enough that we are not falling off, because if we are even advancing, but others at the same time are advancing

more rapidly than we, that is to us a relative though not a positive decline.

I say, then, that the teaching of art and of science too, in its practical application—teaching not confined to a few great centres, but so diffused as to reach the whole body of the artisan class if they chose to avail themselves of it—is one of the requirements of our time. How far that work should be undertaken by the State, and how far by private enterprise, is a question on which I need not enter here. Abroad the State does everything, but we must bear in mind that abroad large private fortunes are few, and the habit of giving freely out of private means to public objects is not one encouraged by the condition of society. It is a mistake to copy servilely the arrangements of other countries, and I believe that the combination of central help and central inspection on the one hand, with local and individual initiative on the other, is for England in general the best. But that is a question which the Legislature alone can settle. What I urge upon you now is, not that technical education should be pushed on in this way rather than in that, but that it should be pushed on in some fashion. When people really want a thing done they are not likely to quarrel long about the best way of doing it. I do not mean to imply that nothing has been accomplished in this matter. That would be far from the truth.

We have at the present time in the United Kingdom about 187,000 persons receiving instruction in drawing from certificated teachers, and the total income of the various schools of art throughout the country is returned at nearly 38,000*l.* for the year ending 1870. I cannot say that these figures, taken by themselves, seem very satisfactory. If you were to take corresponding figures in almost any small German State, they would probably require to be multiplied five or six fold at least in proportion to population. But when we compare ourselves as we are with ourselves as we were—when we see that the 38,000*l.* of 1870 were represented by less than 27,000*l.* in 1866, and that the 180,000 students were in 1866

only 105,000—we have evidence of growth and life and progress for the time sufficiently rapid.

There is one other point on which I should have liked to say a word if time allowed. We live in a very busy and not in a very beautiful part of England. If the country continues to prosper, these districts will be still busier and still less pleasant to see. More than half our population now live in great towns, and these towns, I am afraid, are the ugliest as well as the biggest in Europe. Now, can it be a good thing for generations to grow up, one after another, seeing nothing, except on some rare holiday, except what is squalid, dirty, and mean? It seems to me absolute cruelty to give a man by artistic training a keen sense and appreciation of natural beauty, and then to set him down to live in the centre of—well, I will say even Liverpool, and still more of such places as the great towns on the coalfield. Is it a law of nature that things must always continue as they are in this respect? I do not see it. The smoke which shuts out the sky, chemicals which destroy vegetation, the unlovely sights which in any one of these towns meet you at every turn, are all preventable evils, and preventable, most of them, at no very great cost.

There may be persons who think a question of this kind very trifling and unpractical. I differ from them. All art imitates Nature. If I were to look at it from an artistic point of view only, I should not be very sanguine of your being able to develop a real and a popular taste for art in places where all natural beauty is driven away and destroyed. That, however, is a very wide subject, and perhaps in this part of the world it is rather a delicate subject. I leave it for others to dwell upon if they choose; meanwhile, we shall all agree in wishing success to this School of Art, and that the example set here may be widely followed.

XXV

ON INTELLECTUAL TRAINING—EDUCATION AND LIFE

THE OPENING OF THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL MANCHESTER: OCTOBER 25, 1871

I RISE now to propose a toast, which on the printed list is designated by the one short and classical word *Domus*, and which I suppose I may translate into the more ordinary language of after-dinner speaking by saying that I am about to ask you to drink 'Prosperity to the Manchester Grammar School.' I do that with the more satisfaction because I am speaking here in the presence of many of those who have done the most to bring about that condition of prosperity, and who have spared neither time, nor thought, nor money in the cause. . . . And it will not be their fault, it will not be the fault of Manchester, if the school which has existed now for upwards of 300 years, and which counts among its old pupils the names of Cyril Jackson and De Quincey, does not retain at the present day its old reputation and occupy its old position.

I suppose the process that has been going on here is not peculiar to this city, or to this country. Partly by the use of old endowments—partly also, and to a much greater extent, by the liberality of living men and women in every part of England, and almost in every large town, a foundation is being laid for teaching of a high class to be given at a very moderate cost. And if the plans (and I think they are fair and reasonable plans) of the educationists of the present day are realised to their full extent, we shall have within the present generation, in connection with this and other schools, a system of exhibitions, of scholarships, call them what you will, open to competition, and holding out to lads and to

young men of exceptional ability the prospect of a high-class education, which will be for all practical purposes very nearly gratuitous.

It is not at all unreasonable to expect that, in a few years, we may have a system of teaching so far extended over the whole face of the country that no boy of real talent need be kept back by mere poverty from whatever chances of distinction may otherwise be open to him; and those chances will, undoubtedly, not be few. With free admission, as you have it now, to the Civil Service of the State (not that that Service is quite so well paid as a great many people who are anxious to get into it are apt to imagine); with military colleges open also to competition; and with an increased proportion of educational appointments of one kind or another (and I suppose I ought to reckon among those educational appointments situations on the press, which is the educator of us all); with all these things, I suppose that there will be a demand for a very fair proportion, though probably not for all, of the talent and of the industry which it is the business of these schools to foster. That is in various ways a satisfactory condition of things. It gives fair play to rich and poor alike. It gives the State as good a chance as it is likely to have of obtaining the services of the most competent men; though, of course, it cannot prevent the State from being outbid, as in this country it is very likely to be, by private employers. And, what is more important, it tends to raise the general intellectual condition of the community. It is, in one word, the realisation of what the educational reformers of the last half-century have wanted and have worked for.

But we must not suppose, when we have got that state of things established, that it is one altogether free from inconveniences of its own. You are going, if you succeed in what you intend to do, to make the educated man a very cheap article in the market, and, of course, the difficulty will be to prevent the supply from overrunning the demand. You must prepare to face that difficulty. If intellectual ability is to be more generally developed, and if that development is to proceed on a great scale, it follows that intellectual labour

(except labour of the highest class, which, of course, is exceptional) will command a lower rate of pay. That is a social condition which exists in many countries, and which has its very obvious drawbacks.

I have heard it said that, in one country of Southern Europe particularly distinguished by the great natural acuteness of intellect which is the characteristic of the population, every peasant's son gets tolerably well educated, and every peasant's son acquires a firm conviction that he is destined to be, if not a Minister of State, at least a lawyer, or a doctor, or a professional man of some sort, and that it is entirely unworthy of his abilities to keep a shop or to manage a farm. I do not know whether that is true or not in the particular case; but one can see that that is a feeling which is likely to grow up, and the growth of which, wherever it does exist, is a danger. I believe we are less liable to it in this country than elsewhere, partly on account of the practical habits of our race and the inclination we all have to rush into business, into active life, with the smallest possible preparation; partly also because the industrial outlets in this country are greater than in any other nation, except perhaps the United States. Still the danger exists, and we are bound to be on our guard against it. Nothing could be more natural than that a young fellow who has distinguished himself at school, and perhaps at college, should think it hard to have to turn for his living to some dull mechanical pursuit, where he might get on just as well without his brains, and the education that has cost so much, as with them. Yet that must be the fate of many, and probably of a numerical majority of the whole. Men of sense accept that state of things as a necessary preliminary to future success, and for the most part they succeed. Men who have not sense (and it does not always follow that sense and book learning go together) take a different view of it; and sometimes they go about the world complaining that they can get no work that is fit for them; and sometimes, if they are of a more unquiet disposition, they are apt to think, as somebody has said, that they are the fittest people for the world as it ought to be,

because they have found out to their own cost that they are quite unfit for the world as it is.

I was reading the other day—and I mention it in illustration of what I am saying—an amusing little book relating the adventures of a colonist in Australia. He mentioned having been one of four shepherds upon a sheep farm, one of whom had taken a degree at Oxford, another had taken a degree at Cambridge, a third in a German University, and a fourth had served as an officer in the Crimean war; and the squatter who was the employer of all of them was an emigrant, who came from the lowest class, and was hardly able to keep his own accounts. Of course you may ask why, if you are to talk at all about educational matters, you should mention instances of that sort, because they can only serve to discourage young men from minding their work, and lead them to believe that there is nothing in the world except luck.

I do not take that view of it at all. I believe that, as a rule, other things being equal, the qualities which enable a young man to succeed in a school or college competition are those qualities which will enable him to succeed in after life. They are industry, perseverance, and a steady attention to details. All I say is, Do not let a young man imagine, because he has received a superior education, that therefore he is to be above the ordinary work that comes to him to do; and above all, don't let him suppose that, because the public, by means of endowments and cheap schools and otherwise, has helped him to develop his faculties, that therefore the public is under some kind of moral obligation to find him congenial employment for the rest of his days. That may sound to some people a very needless caution, but it is one which, if I had anything to do with teaching, I should never lose an opportunity of enforcing. The great bulk of the work that has to be done in the world is of a rather homely and rough character; and a feeling of contempt for any kind of labour which is not distinctly and exclusively intellectual is one of the most unfortunate and dangerous fancies with which a young man can start in life.

If there is any truth in what I have been trying to say, I think there is a moral in it for the teachers as well as for the taught: and that moral is that, while literature is not to be neglected or ignored in any general educational scheme, science and the practical application of science, for a knowledge of which there is always a demand in this country, and especially in this part of the country, ought to receive a greater share of attention than, as a general rule, it does receive in our English instruction. I believe that here scientific teaching is placed fully upon an equality with the other branches of study. But that, as we all know, is not the case throughout England generally; and I can only say that I hope the example which we have set in that respect will be followed.

I have only one word more to say. I am quite aware that it is a serious matter in this country to be supposed to give utterance to views which are speculative or unpractical in their character; but I will venture to contend that, however desirable it may be that young men with their way to make in the world should qualify themselves to make it, yet that that is not the only object, perhaps that it is not the principal object, of a really sound education. The wish to get on is legitimate and reasonable. But after all it is a wish which not everybody can gratify, because getting on means getting ahead of your neighbours, and for one who wins there must be many who are left behind. And I may add that we do not particularly require in this part of the world as a rule to be taught how to make money. That is a lesson which we have learned tolerably well. What we do want to learn—and it is a lesson which perhaps some foreign countries understand better than we do—is how to make high culture and intellectual tastes compatible with very moderate means; how to show that refinement may exist without luxury; and that comparative poverty does not necessarily imply either ignorance or coarseness. That is easy in theory; it is not always easy in practice; and to obtain this end appears to me one of the chief and one of the most permanently important objects for which colleges and schools of this kind exist.

XXVI

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY—THE HOUSE OF LORDS —THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND—THE LICENSING LAWS—THE BALLOT—THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—TRADE AND FINANCE—IRELAND

LIVERPOOL: JANUARY 9, 1872

I HAVE more than once, on former occasions, been asked to attend the annual meeting of this Association, and though not very fond of discussing purely political questions in the recess, still I could not but feel that you had claims on me, both as a neighbour and as a member of a political party. Now, I hope I shall not disappoint some of my friends if I say I am not here to make observations on the departmental failings or mistakes of our present Government.[1] . . . Nor have I come here, gentlemen, like some sanguine persons who have been of late before the public, with a patent plan in my pocket for making everybody happy—for fixing the rate of wages and the hours of work by Act of Parliament, and turning all the artisans of great towns into the country districts. I may have a word to say about schemes of that kind by-and-by; but the use of our meeting, if we are to meet at all, is, that we may be able to take stock of our position, to see how we stand, what is the work we have got before us to do, and what are our means and prospects of being able to do it.

First of all, one word as to the position of the Conservative party. There are friends of ours who are inclined to grow slack and indifferent about public affairs, because, they say, 'What can we do when we are in a minority of 100?'

[1] Mr. Gladstone's first Administration had at this time been in office for more than three years.

I do not take that view. Certainly, if political life were what some people consider it—a 'soaped pole,' with 5,000*l.* a year and lots of patronage at the top; if the end and object of all party efforts were the holding of office for a longer or shorter time, I might agree with them, though even in that point of view the Conservative position is very different from what it was three years ago. But, gentlemen, the holding of office is only a means; power is the end—power over the legislative and administrative conduct of affairs; and a party which, at the very lowest estimate of its strength, includes two-fifths of the House of Commons, may exercise very great power when those who sit opposite to it are notoriously divided into sections which have hardly an idea in common.

Take, as an illustration, the Education Bill of 1870. Do you suppose that measure—a fair and honest attempt, as I hold it to be, to keep the balance even between conflicting interests—would ever have passed if there had not been a Conservative opposition to back up the Minister against his own followers? And, depend upon it, what was done then will have to be done again. How much sympathy do you suppose there is between a Whig Duke or a Liberal millionaire, on the one hand, and a politician like Mr. Odger, or Mr. Auberon Herbert, or Sir Charles Dilke, on the other? When we are told that the great Liberal party is all-powerful, let us first know what the great Liberal party is. Is it in favour of putting Irish education into Ultramontane hands, which is what Irish Liberals want, or of purely secular education, which is what English Radicals want? Is it in favour of Mr. Miall's scheme for ecclesiastical disestablishment and disendowment for England? Is it prepared to vote for breaking down all large accumulations of property by graduated taxation, and of confiscating the land under one pretext or another, which is what the Republican clubs want? Is it in favour of colonial separation, which is the theory of Mr. Goldwin Smith's school; or of colonial federation, which is the cry of another party?

I do not put these questions by way of taunt or reproach

to those who sit opposite to us. What I contend for is this, that with the Ballot Bill, about which I shall have a word to say presently, the old Liberal programme will have disappeared; that new subjects of controversy in their turn are cropping up; and that upon those new questions we have fair ground to hope that the view taken by the present, and still more by the next, House of Commons will be a Conservative rather than a Radical view. Only do not let us spoil our own game; do not let us lose power by running after place. If we become the majority, as we may, it is our duty to accept the responsibilities of that position. But for myself, I tell you frankly, though I should rejoice to see a strong Conservative Government in power, I had infinitely rather, in the public interest and that of our party, see the Conservatives forming a strong and compact opposition than have them, for the fourth time in the last twenty years, holding office without the support of an assured majority. That is my conviction, and I believe it is that of most Conservatives who have had any experience in affairs.

Now, how do we stand as regards the great institutions of the country? The Crown is safe enough. We have had evidence on that point within the last few weeks that is worth any amount of argument. As to the House of Lords, I am very far from saying that it is perfect, or that we could not do something to improve and strengthen it. Undoubtedly, if we were framing the Constitution for the first time, we should not select by a rather arbitrary process some 400 or 500 heads of families, and constitute them a separate branch of the Legislature. This much only I will say in defence of the hereditary principle, that you cannot condemn it in the Peerage without condemning it in the Monarchy also; because among 400 well-educated men, it is by the law of chances a matter of absolute certainty that you will find a certain number competent to take a leading and active part in public affairs, whereas in the case of Royalty it is a pure question of chance whether the Sovereign for the time being be personally competent or not.

But there are other considerations to be borne in mind. Many people think—I do for one—that it would not be exactly safe to attempt to carry on affairs by a single Chamber without any check, even the check of a temporary delay, on the impulses and passions of the moment. Despotic power is not good for any man or any set of men; and you have to take into account also this historical fact, that every attempt made in modern times to create an effective second Chamber has been a failure. If that Chamber is composed of Crown nominees appointed for life, they are looked upon—perhaps in most cases not unjustly—as mere Government hacks or worn-out officials. If it is elective, you have then two similarly constituted bodies, liable to exactly the same impulses, and therefore unfit to control one another. The American Senate, which is sometimes referred to, is an institution by itself, because it represents separate and sovereign States, each of which has its own Legislature for internal affairs. That is a condition which we have not, and cannot have, here. In one word, what I would suggest to the gentlemen who agitate against the House of Lords, and who lately sat in judgment upon it at Birmingham—though somehow that agitation went off in an unexpectedly quiet manner—what I would say to them is: Do not content yourselves with finding fault with the Lords as they are, but tell us first whether you want a second Chamber at all; and next, if you do, give us your opinion how it should be framed. If they take the first of these alternatives, they will be in a small minority, and if they adopt the second, they will find they have a tougher job on their hands than they are aware of.

For my own part, while I should utterly object to an unlimited creation of peerages for life, and especially to any renewal of the attempt of fourteen years ago to create them by reviving an antiquated prerogative, I see no harm and some advantage in a limited number of peerages of that class. And I say so mainly for this reason: Under an hereditary system, pauper peerages are a misfortune. They create a temptation to jobbing and place-hunting; and, as matters stand, it will

often happen that an able man, with a family and without a fortune, either refuses to go into the House of Lords, and so his services are lost to that body, or accepts a peerage which is merely an encumbrance and a disadvantage to his successors, because it cuts them off from many legitimate means of pushing their own fortune, while it places them politically and socially in a false position.

The next great institution against which attacks are directed is the Church, and it is perfectly natural that the success of the party of disestablishment in Ireland should have encouraged the supporters of a similar policy here. Logically, I don't see much difference between the two cases. The ground on which the Irish Church was abolished was that it is an insult and an injury to any man that a religious persuasion which is not his should be endowed and connected with the State. Well, if that is so, I don't know that it makes much difference whether the persons so insulted and injured are a majority or a minority of the nation.

I am not surprised that Protestant Dissenters should argue that as much consideration is due to their scruples as to those of the Catholic hierarchy. As against Mr. Gladstone and his friends, I think they have the best of the argument; but legislation is not guided by logic, and, practically, I believe the position of the Church Establishment to be unassailable, at any rate for as long a period as we need look to, provided only that those who belong to it can manage to keep the peace among themselves. I look on that question as one which is entirely in their own hands. Nonconformists and Secularists combined will not bring about disestablishment; but the real question is whether the contending parties within the Church itself can keep their hands off one another. If they cannot, if there is any considerable secession on one side or the other, I should begin to fear that the end was not far off. But, so far, English common sense has been too strong for the spirit of faction, and I hope it will be so still.

The battlefield for the moment is the Education question; and here I think our Nonconformist friends are a little

unreasonable. If they can show that in any one particular, that in any—the slightest—degree they were put by the Act of 1870 in a worse position than their rivals, I should at once admit that they had a fair ground of complaint. But that is not alleged. It is not even contended that the schools belonging to the Establishment get any help which is refused to theirs. The point on which the present agitation has arisen is one which was hardly noticed in debate when the Act was passed. It is impossible not to see that the real grievance lies deeper; that they have been startled, and perhaps disappointed, to find how large an amount of wealth and social influence belonging to the Establishment could be brought to bear on the setting up and maintenance of schools. Well, I am not here to speak as a partisan of any system. I wish all to have fair play; but I must observe that I think they have fair play under the present arrangement. Wherever Nonconformists are strong enough to set up a school of their own, that school gets a share of public help; where they are not strong enough for that, they have all the security that a stringent conscience clause can give them against any doctrine being taught to their children of which they disapprove; and if in any district Churchmen are in a small minority—the same security—no less, but no more is conceded to them. Parliament has undoubtedly maintained what is called the 'denominational system;' but it has done so only in deference to the clearly-expressed opinion of the great majority of the people, and for my part I think the popular instinct has been right.

You cannot ignore the existence of strong sectarian and ecclesiastical feeling, whether you like it or not. The practical alternative is either to use the services of men who are guided to some extent by that feeling, and who, under its influence, will make large sacrifices of time and money to help in the work of popular teaching, or to try and set up a contrary system in the face of a most determined and violent opposition, and with comparatively little private help. I am quite sure that any attempt to adopt the latter plan would

have thrown back the cause of popular teaching half a century, and on that ground—leaving other reasons aside—I rejoice that it has not been attempted.

Just one word more on this subject. I am afraid that some of our School Boards are rather too ambitious, and are aiming at much more than can usefully be taught in the great majority of cases. They are not likely to take any hint of mine; but I think they hardly make allowance for the shortness of time, for the stupidity of the average human intellect, and for the wonderful facility with which boys and men forget quickly and completely what they have only half learnt. That will settle itself; and on the general question of education all I have to say comes to this: You have got a system which promises to work fairly well. That, under all the difficulties of the case, is much to have accomplished. Do not be in a hurry to alter it; at any rate, let it work for some years, and then, if there is a real grievance anywhere—which I do not admit there is—we shall see more clearly where the shoe pinches.

There is another matter of great social interest with which Parliament will probably have to deal next Session: I mean the Licensing question. It is not a very easy or simple one, and, as usually happens, those who see its difficulties least are most confident that they have found the way to settle it. There is a general feeling, and I am afraid one cannot deny that it is well founded, that as a nation we are a little too fond of good liquor. I think there is great exaggeration in what is commonly said about drunken habits, because we must remember that a perfectly sober, temperate man of the middle or upper classes, who consumes his three or four glasses of wine daily, and never is the worse for them, gets through a great deal more drink in the course of the year than most of the poor fellows who go in for too much beer on Saturday night, and get into trouble in consequence.

Still, making allowances of that kind, there is no doubt that a good deal of crime and disease is due to intemperance. We all want to check that, if we only knew how; and every year various plans are put forward for that purpose. One of

those plans is that preposterous scheme framed by a body of men calling themselves the United Kingdom Alliance. Their theory is, that if by any means you could persuade two-thirds of the ratepayers of a district that beer is objectionable, they shall have the right to impose that rule of diet on the remaining third. Now that is sheer tyranny and intolerance of the worst sort. It would be just as reasonable to lay it down that where two-thirds of the population of any district were Protestants, no Catholic should be allowed to open a place of worship; or that where two-thirds were Liberals, no Conservative should be allowed to set up a newspaper. But I will not waste your time in discussing that theory. We have our national faults, but a sour and morose fanaticism is not one of them. If those Puritans of the nineteenth century were to carry their point, they would find, like the Puritans of the seventeenth century, that they had only produced, during a few years, an apparent conformity, which would be followed by a reaction of excess which everybody would deplore.

The other proposals are, in various ways, to cut down the number of licensed houses by refusing fresh licences, and gradually cancelling the old ones. That is the direction which the last attempt at legislation took. But there is one very awkward feature attending it, that the more you follow the policy of limiting numbers, the more you are putting into a few hands a close and profitable monopoly, with the inevitable result that a worse article is supplied at a higher price. Another course, again, is to leave the trade open to all competitors, but to enforce stricter regulations as to hours of management. That is a policy which just now is out of fashion, though it is easier to abuse it than to show that it is wrong.

On the whole, I do not think that we shall this year pass any large measure, or, as the phrase is, 'settle the question;' but something will be tried, and I think it will be the duty of Conservatives to help as far as they can. For myself I have no great faith in this kind of legislation, except as a temporary expedient. Time, and teaching, and the force of

opinion will do more than any Act of Parliament. The passion for drink is a disease rather than a vice—a disease generated sometimes by bad air, sometimes by excessive labour, often by poor and ill-chosen diet, and often, again, by inherited morbid tendencies. To believe that you can cure it throughout the country in a year, or even in a few years, is to go against all the teachings of experience. That there will be improvement I do not doubt, but I believe it will be a work of time, and that in the poorer classes, as in the richer classes, a reform of social habits will come about gradually and almost imperceptibly.

Well, gentlemen, I am addressing you under great physical difficulties, and I will not take you through the probable legislation of next Session; but there are one or two measures to which you will expect me to advert. We are promised a Mines Regulation Bill, and I think it will be only fair to ask that it shall be brought forward at a time when it can have full and deliberate consideration. We are promised a Scotch Education Bill, and I have no doubt, from the practical good sense which characterises Scotchmen of all parties, that question will be brought to a satisfactory issue. We are threatened with a renewal of last year's Rating Bill, and I can only say that if it in any degree resembles the plan brought forward by Mr. Goschen, I hope it will be as speedily and summarily disposed of as that was. We are led to expect that something will be done for sanitary improvement; and of all agitations that can be set on foot or imagined, I can conceive none more entirely justifiable than an agitation for pure air, pure water, and freedom from poisoning from bad drainage.

Sanitary reformers have a very wide field before them; but I must pass over that class of questions with only one observation. What we want in sanitary matters is not so much better laws as more effective machinery for enforcing the laws we have. There is power in the law as it now stands to put down most kinds of nuisances, but there is nobody to take the initiative. Very few men like to put themselves in the invidious position of public prosecutors, and I never

noticed that they got thanks from anybody if they did. But while I say that, I am no advocate for rushing into vast and costly plans at the shortest notice. It is quite on the cards that the next generation may find out that the gigantic drainage works, on which so many millions have been spent, are comparatively useless, and what we want now is, not so much a few schemes of national dimensions, as a more minute and careful supervision of little local details, which do not make any particular show, but which, being looked after or neglected, constitute the whole difference between a healthy and an unhealthy district.

Well, we are to have the ballot over again, probably, as soon as Parliament meets;[1] and on that subject I would merely repeat the opinion which I have expressed more than once in former years—that there is no question in the whole range of politics the practical importance of which appears to me to have been so much exaggerated. The cry for the ballot was raised forty or fifty years ago, when there were many exceedingly small constituencies in which half a dozen votes might turn the scale, and where the owners of those votes were mostly in an entirely dependent condition. I do not believe that, even then, it would have made the change which was supposed, because you must remember this, that no system of secret voting can ever be more than a half protection. Those who can bribe, or those who can intimidate, if there are any, cannot indeed, where votes are secret, insure a vote being given in their favour; but they can always insure the absence from the poll of a voter who they know is determined to go against them. Nor have I any great faith in bribery being checked by that method. Payment by results may be applied to elections as well as to schools, and, odd as it may seem, I believe there are very many men so constituted that their consciences, or their sense of duty, will not prevent their taking a bribe, but who yet will have honour enough left (if honour you can call it) to give their vote so paid for, either in secret or openly, for the candidate to whom they promised it.

[1] The Ballot Act was subsequently passed in this year.

However, I do not think this is the time or place to go into the argument. I believe that, even if secret voting is carried, you will still know how 99 men out of 100 have voted. They will think it a mean and cowardly thing to use any disguise in the matter, and as to the hundredth—the prudent, cautious, timid individual—who will not let his wife or his friend know what his politics are, why he is not likely to be a dangerous revolutionist. And let me just observe, in passing, I do not think our Liberal friends pay themselves a high compliment when they assume, as a matter of course, that all persons of that description—that is, all the cowards and all the sneaks—are likely to be on their side. They are quite welcome to have them; but I expect, as a fact, the number will not be great anyhow. What seems to me to be the practical part of the question is how to prevent personation, and it is to that point, I think, that our consideration ought now to be mainly directed. We want an effectual check against men voting, as the phrase goes, 'early and often,' and we have fair ground for objecting to any measure that does not give us security on that point.

There is an infinitely larger subject to which I should like to see the attention of Parliament directed; but whether it will be so or not, during the present year, I have no means of judging—the reform of judicial administration. Our Bench and Bar are, for learning, for ability, and for high professional honour, unsurpassed in the world. In that respect there is no improvement to ask for. But I do not think we can deny that, notwithstanding all that has been done of late years, justice is still sometimes very slow and often very costly. I speak under reserve as a layman, but I do not think it ought to be difficult to establish a single and supreme Court of Appeal. I do not see why the highest Equity Judge of the land should be placed in the wholly anomalous and inconsistent position of being also a member of the Cabinet, and therefore a political partisan. Nor can I understand why, when there is no want of competent men to relieve one another, so large a part of our judicial machinery should stand still for

four months out of the twelve. There is much useful work to be done in this line, and I do not see why Conservatives should not help to do it.

In finance—a question which touches our feelings very nearly—all we need ask of our rulers is not to play tricks. We are doing well now, and if we continue at peace we shall do better. But it is possible to be too ingenious; and a great many people will be relieved from anxiety if the Chancellor of the Exchequer next April condescends to give us a commonplace Budget. If I were to throw out a suggestion on that subject it would be that we ought to turn our thoughts more than we do to the reduction of the debt. Our present prosperity may not last for ever. I speak advisedly when I tell you that we are not, any of us, rich or poor, paying, in proportion to our income, one-half the burdens which were borne by our grandfathers in the time of the great war. Probably one-third would be nearer the mark; and I don't think it is altogether satisfactory to anticipate that our descendants 150 or 200 years hence may still be paying the bill for Waterloo and Trafalgar.

If we could be sure of perpetual peace, we might be content to allow the cost of former wars to remain a perpetual charge. But this is not the case; and we may reasonably utilise a time —it may be only an interval—of safety and prosperity to clear ourselves from at least some part of this old inherited burden. If we don't do that—if every war is to add to the debt, and every interval of peace is to leave it undiminished, or very nearly so, there is only one ending; and I, for one, am not reconciled to the thought of bankruptcy or repudiation merely by the consideration that it will not come in my time.

In regard to material resources and prospects, we have nothing just now to complain of. Trade is flourishing, the people are employed, and pauperism has perceptibly diminished. Very much more remains to be done in that respect; but I am expressing to you one of the deepest and strongest convictions of my mind when I say that for those social improvements which we all desire, and which are in everybody's

mouth, we must look to the community acting for itself in the first instance, and to governments and legislators only in rare and exceptional cases. I know that is with many people an unpalatable doctrine; but bear with me for a moment while I state it.

What are the characteristic national achievements of which Englishmen in the present day are most apt to boast? I think any one would name—next to our free government—our unparalleled commerce, our unlimited command of capital, the manufactures in which we excel and with which we supply the whole world, our railway system—the first established and the most complete which any country possesses—and our newspaper press, to which I will not pay a compliment, because compliments of that kind from public men are always suspicious, but of which you may judge for yourselves. Is not every one of these things the work, the unassisted work, of individual enterprise, as distinguished from State agency? Take, again, your trade unions, by which working men have obtained in so many branches of business their demand for higher wages and shorter hours of work. They did not ask help from Parliament to found those unions or to carry them on. They acted more sensibly—they did the work themselves. Well, cannot you do the same with the great majority at least of those wants which are reasonably and properly being put forward? Artisans, we are told, require better houses—I agree in that—and foolish and fantastic schemes are afloat for some State machinery which is to empty the towns into the country. But are there no such things as land companies and building companies? And is there any reason why in every town, and why in every part of the country, artisans should not be able to build and buy their own houses, paying for them gradually, as in many thousand cases they have done already? But, it is asked, why should not the State undertake this work? What is the objection? I answer that State agency is not wanted to give you a house or anything else at the fair market price; and if the proposal is to give it for less than a fair price, for less

than it costs, then you are opening a door which will let in more than you think for. If houses are to be supplied on those terms, why not clothes? why not meat? why not bread? And so you come by a sharp and easy process to what is simply universal and undisguised pauperism.

Again, there are great outcries about the adulteration of articles of food. By all means punish adulterators if you can catch them; and I should agree that, as the law stands, they get off too easily; but surely for that abuse—and it is a very great one—the best and simplest remedy is the co-operative store, which you can set up for yourselves without asking help or fearing hindrance from any man. I do not tell you in so many words that the State should take on itself no functions except those which it actually performs; but I do tell you that the tendency to enlarge indefinitely the scope of its operations is one to be watched with great jealousy. There is risk of extravagance and jobbery; there is discouragement of individual enterprise; there is loss of individual self-reliance; there is the inevitable discontent caused by the disappointment of unreasonable expectations; and, if time allowed, a good deal might be said as to the way in which these evils have been and are felt in other countries in which governmental interference is carried further than here.

Well, gentlemen, you will be glad to hear that I am getting to the end of a long story. I need not detain you by discussing the state of our foreign relations, because at this moment there is no foreign question that is particularly urgent. The warmest friends of the Ministry will not claim for them that either the Black Sea negotiations or the settlement with the United States has been a diplomatic victory. And, on the other hand, it is fair to tell you that I do not see any reasonable ground for apprehending that we are likely to be involved in foreign complications. No man can predict the future, and no doubt it seems probable enough that a struggle for military supremacy on the Continent will not be ended by the war of last year; but we were neutrals in the European wars of 1860, of 1866, and of 1870, and with

ordinary prudence and common sense—I do not say merely on the part of our officials, but also on the part of the nation, with which the ultimate decision of peace or war must rest—I see no reason why we should not continue to hold a neutral position when the next great fight comes off. This only I will add, that we must be consistent, and not expect things which are incompatible with one another. Moral influence is very well in its way, but between combatants it does not go far. If we hold it our duty, as I do for one, to keep this country out of the risks and miseries of an unnecessary war, we must not complain that we do not dictate the conditions of peace.

The least satisfactory part of our national position is, to my mind, the state of Ireland. We have exhausted the list of what, rightly or wrongly, have been considered remedial measures. The Church is disestablished and disendowed; the land has been practically handed over to the peasantry. No further sacrifice of that kind remains to be made. And what are our thanks? Why, the disaffected party tell you every day that, but for the Fenian movement, the Irish Church would still have been on its legs, and but for the shooting of landlords and agents the demands of the peasantry would never have been listened to. And do not let us deceive ourselves, gentlemen; when they say that, they are not very far from the truth. If Ireland had remained quiet you would have heard nothing, at least for many years to come, of a Church Act or a Land Act. That state of things is not exactly discouragement to future agitation. You are now face to face with two claims which you must resist—one the claim of the Ultramontane party to control all education; the other the demand for what is called 'Home Rule,' which, as every child can see, practically means Irish independence.

Nobody supposes that an Irish Parliament would confine itself for a single Session to purely local affairs, or that anything short of the Constitution of 1782 would satisfy those who have raised the cry. I do not argue that point, because,

happily, it is one on which there are not two opinions in England. But I do think that the other question to which I refer—that of education—will require to be closely watched. There are a good many politicians—not on our side the House—who believe in the theory of governing Ireland through the Catholic clergy, and I think some leanings in that direction may be observed in very high quarters. Now, that is a system to which there are two objections: one, that the English nation—which, after all, has a voice in the matter—will not endure it; the other, that, even if it could be acted upon, the Catholic clergy do not by any means possess the power which is commonly ascribed to them. Their strength has always lain in following the popular movement which they seem to lead, and if that feeling points in the direction of repeal, they cannot help themselves, and will be repealers to a man. I have no great scheme to propose, nor do I believe in any remedy of that sort. I agree with Lord Hartington that there is nothing to be done except to show patience and firmness—we shall know, I suppose, in a few weeks what is meant by that utterance—and I hope that when we come to learn what is intended, we may find that the policy of Ministers is such as we are able honestly to support.

Well, gentlemen, I think I need detain you no longer. I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to rather a dry discourse. Let us keep together as a political connection; let us work and wait; let there be no quarrels among ourselves—let there be no apathy on the one hand, and no undue precipitation on the other; and, depend upon it, upon whatever benches we sit, we shall not have been without influence on the future destinies of this country, nor shall we fail to enjoy those opportunities of doing public service which constitute the chief inducement to any honest and rational man to engage in the labours and anxieties of political life.

XXVII

SANITARY QUESTIONS—MANAGEMENT OF HOSPITALS

Bootle: April 10, 1872

I congratulate the inhabitants of Bootle on the completion and opening of this hospital. We are, though not one of the smallest, yet one of the very youngest, of English boroughs; but I hope we shall not be found behind our neighbours either in public spirit or in thoughtful care for the welfare of those on whose labour our prosperity depends. It is not two years since I came here to lay the first stone of the building now completed, and I then took occasion to say something as to the extreme importance, not only of institutions which, like this, serve for the cure of disease, but of that preventive care and watchfulness which checks the spread of disease, and which, carried to its ultimate result, would almost supersede the necessity of hospitals, except for cases of accidental injury. I rejoice to believe that the conviction which it was my wish on that occasion to impress is spreading wider, and sinking deeper, among and into the minds of the English people.

It is just a week since Mr. Disraeli, speaking at Manchester on all the subjects of the day, referred to the sanitary question as that which lies at the bottom of all national well-being and greatness. Thirty years ago—perhaps even a dozen years ago—language of that kind from a political leader would have been thought eccentric and paradoxical; now it is accepted as a fair expression of the feelings and wants of the time. That is a remarkable change; let the credit of it be given where it is due. It is owing to the

collective labour of many individuals, personally for the most part obscure, but who have worked in a spirit of unselfish devotion to a great and useful cause. It is to the honour of the medical profession that workers of that kind have never been rare among its members, and that while, on the one hand, no class of society has so freely given its time and care for the relief of suffering among the poor, so, on the other hand, no set of men have so habitually looked beyond the mere temporary relief of existing evils, or so strenuously asserted the doctrine—some people would add against their own selfish interests—that prevention is better than cure.

But I am not going into questions of sanitary legislation; this is not the place or the time for discussions of that kind. But let me just observe this, that the conviction which sanitary knowledge brings with it as to the preventability in general of disease is one of quite incalculable importance. Men are very slow to learn the extent to which their destinies are in their own power. They are apt to be astonished if you point out to them that nine-tenths of the calamities that have afflicted the human race are directly and obviously the work of men's own hands. They are inclined to confound that feeling which we all respect, that of cheerful acceptance of the inevitable, with that other kind of resignation to evils which are not inevitable, which is mostly laziness and apathy, and the prevalance of which is one of the most characteristic distinctions between the savage and the civilised man. And why do I say this? Because I am deeply convinced that no sanitary improvement worth the name will be effected, whatever Acts you pass, or whatever powers you confer upon public officers, unless you can create a real and intelligent interest in the matter among the people at large. In the first place, you cannot get laws effectually put in force where they interfere with the profits or convenience of individuals, unless they are supported by opinion.

In the next place, whatever administrative measures can do for the public health—and they can do a great deal—they can never supersede the necessity for personal and private

care. It is no good providing pure water for drinking if those who are meant to consume it prefer less innocent fluids, and a good deal of them. It is no good setting up public baths or washhouses if people don't care to use them; though, let me say, in passing, I think the want of such institutions on an adequate scale is one of the chief defects of our great towns. It is no good purifying the atmosphere from smoke and foul vapours, though that is one of the objects which in these parts we ought to keep most steadily in view, if, when people have got clean air, they will not let it into their houses. The State may issue directions, municipal authorities may execute them to the best of their power, inspectors may travel about, medical authorities may draw up reports, but you can't make a population cleanly or healthy against their will, or without their intelligent co-operation. The opportunity may be furnished by others, but the work must be done by themselves. That is why, of the two, sanitary instruction is even more essential than sanitary legislation; for, if in these matters the public knows what it wants, sooner or later the legislation will follow; but the best laws in a country like this are waste paper if they are not appreciated and understood.

I will not waste words in dwelling on the importance of this question of national health. Everything depends upon it. It is by continuous and persevering labour alone, hand-work and head-work, that England holds its position against other countries more favoured by Nature; but without a high standard of vitality—and that, as you know, implies more than a mere lengthening out of life—labour such as we require cannot be kept up. Again, where you have to deal with men in masses, the connection between vice and disease is very close. With a low average of popular health you will have a low average of national morality, and probably also of national intellect. Drunkenness, and vice of other kinds, will flourish in such a soil, and you cannot get healthy brains to grow on unhealthy bodies. Cleanliness and self-respect go together, and it is no paradox to affirm that you tend to purify

men's thoughts and feelings when you purify the air they breathe.

It used to be thought that the vast unnecessary destruction of human life which takes place in all populous countries was, if a misfortune, yet a misfortune not without its compensations; because, it was argued, if that destruction ceased, all the inconvenience of surplus population would follow. But that is a danger which we have not now to apprehend. There is no fear, in the present state of the labour market, of our being overdone with hands for whom no employment can be found; nor do I think we shall be so again, at least for a long time to come. The English labouring classes are getting over their dislike to emigration; and the attraction of new countries will tend to grow stronger rather than weaker. In Ireland, from that cause, population is already stationary, or nearly so, and it is impossible to feel sure that the same condition of things may not prevail here also before many years are over.

I must ask your pardon for what is perhaps somewhat of a digression, though the subject is closely connected with that which has brought us together. Our present business is to open this hospital. Looking to the neighbourhood of the docks, and the crowded district around us, we must fear that its officers are not likely to be in want of occupation. There are only two dangers which an institution like this has to guard against. One is that its gratuitous benefits may be taken advantage of by a class of patients who can afford to pay for the help they get. That is an abuse of which some of the London hospitals have often complained. The remedy is care and honesty in the distribution of letters of admission. The other danger is that the appointments may be given away by personal favour, or to the candidate who is most active in his canvass. Now, that is, to put it plainly, a matter of life and death. Whoever votes for putting A, instead of B, in a medical post, knowing or believing A to be the less competent of the two, is morally responsible for whatever injury to life and health may ensue; and it is not the slightest diminution of that responsibility that he has been flattered or

talked over into giving his vote, or, as very often happens, that he has given it without inquiry to the first person who asked for it. I am not speaking with any special reference. I do not even know by what form of procedure the medical officers are to be chosen here, much less who are to be the candidates; but I do know that when subscribers and governors, as a mixed and numerous body, have to decide on the rival claims of professional men, they are undertaking an exceedingly difficult duty, and one which, with the most honest intentions, they are not always capable of discharging in a satisfactory manner. I do not know that I need trouble you further. You have most of you seen this building inside and outside, and I think you will agree with me that our architect may be complimented on the way in which he has done his work. Use has not been sacrificed to show; and there is nothing of that false taste which we so often see, and which is far worse than the utter absence of ornament.

I now declare this hospital to be open. I feel sure that the work which it is meant to do will have the good wishes of all whom I see around me, and I hope that the expression of your sympathies will not be confined to good wishes; but, remembering that there are no endowments to fall back upon, that you will give it support of a substantial kind.

XXVIII

LORD MAYO

THE INAUGURATION OF THE MAYO MEMORIAL FUND, LONDON, APRIL 27, 1872

A RESOLUTION has been entrusted to me which I shall move with pleasure—at least with so much of pleasure as will be compatible with the performance of a duty which, whether we regard it in its public or in its private aspect, is of an essentially melancholy character. I knew the late Lord Mayo during very many years, first as a colleague in Parliamentary life, and latterly as a colleague in administrative office, and I come here simply as a witness to add my testimony, however little it may be needed, to that which has already been given. I have known other men, though not very many, who were perhaps his equals in industry, in clearsightedness, and in the assemblage of qualities which, united, form what we call a good man of business; and I have known men—though but a few—who possessed perhaps to an equal extent that generosity of disposition in private and public life, that unfeigned good humour and good temper, which were among the most marked characteristics of our lamented friend; but I do not know that I ever met any one in whom those two sets of qualities were so equally and so happily united.

No discussion could be so dry but Lord Mayo would enliven it with that unforced humour which was one of his greatest social charms. No question could be so difficult or so complicated but that his simple, straightforward way of looking at it was quite sure of suggesting something of which you had not thought before. He understood thoroughly how important an element of administrative success is the conciliation of those with whom you have to deal; but the exercise of that power was with him not a matter of calculation, but the result of nature. He did and said kind and

generous things, not because it was politic, not because it was to his political interest, or even because it was his public duty, but because it was his nature and he could not help it. I do not think he had in the world a personal enemy, and so far as it is possible to speak of that which is passing in another man's mind, I should say that he had never known what it was to harbour against a person feelings of resentment or ill-will. That is praise which may be deserved by many smaller men; but personal amiability was not the only feature—it was not even the leading feature—of his eminent public career. We, who acted with him in Irish matters, can bear witness to his firmness, when firmness was necessary, to the soundness of his judgment in difficulties—and difficulties just then were not unfrequent—and, above all, to that coolness which was never more marked than in critical moments.

In India his career was short, but you have heard what was said by his colleague, the Commander-in-chief, upon that part of his life, how he impressed upon the minds of all who had to do with him there that he was one of those characters which rise with the occasion, which grow stronger under pressure, and which are never more themselves than when stimulated by difficulties and by dangers which take from ordinary men the power of action and of decision. He did much as it was; but if, unhappily, that opportunity had been afforded which is only afforded to statesmen in stormy and critical times, I believe he would have been no unworthy successor to the greatest of those predecessors who, in a century, have built up an Empire to which no parallel exists on earth. That a memorial should be raised to Lord Mayo is a duty which we owe—I will not say to him, because his memorial is in the hearts of his friends and in the history of his time—but a duty which we owe to his family. It is a duty which we owe to ourselves, who knew and appreciated him. It is a duty which we owe to England, who, even with all her wealth of political ability, cannot afford to overlook or to forget an example of conspicuous and patriotic service.

XXIX

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION—MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

HUYTON QUARRY: AUGUST 14, 1872

[AFTER some introductory remarks on local matters Lord Derby spoke as follows:]—If we were in the year 1772, it is just possible that on an occasion of this kind I might think it necessary and desirable to address to you some remarks upon the value and importance of popular school teaching, and it is just possible that if, in that year 1772, I or anybody else had done so, you, or many of you, would have thought I was teaching, at any rate, a new and perhaps disputable and dangerous doctrine. But in this year 1872 that subject is nearly worn threadbare. You cannot get up a discussion or controversy about it, because practically we are all of one mind. It strikes us with a painful and uncomfortable feeling when we hear—as in out-of-the-way parts of the country we sometimes do—of lads and girls growing up to manhood and to womanhood who do not know whether Great Britain is an island or not, and who do not know who Queen Victoria is. We are all agreed that cases of that kind shall be impossible in the future. The only dispute and the only controversy that now exists among us is as to the best means of obtaining that indispensable result.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I will not take you into that controversy now, and it is less necessary that I should do so because the controversy itself appears, at any rate for the present, to have worn itself out. We must all, I think, be aware that our present educational arrangements—I speak of those arrangements which exist between individuals or educational bodies on the one hand, and the State on the other—are in their nature of a tentative and experimental

character; and I think we most of us feel that, whether those arrangements shall remain in force as they are, or whether they shall give place to others of a different kind, is a question to be decided, not so much by the action—the political action—of any set of men in Parliament, or out of it, as by the temper and the spirit in which those arrangements are worked by the individuals who, in each locality, have the practical control and direction of them.

In the towns—in the large towns, at least—the matter is comparatively simple. You have not there what is called the religious difficulty, because, practically, every religious denomination is numerous enough to establish schools and to employ teachers of its own. No other inconvenience therefore arises beyond that of some little waste of teaching power. But we all know that in the rural districts the case is different. We know that there the great majority of parents are all of one way of thinking, and that as a consequence there is a small minority who are not, in general, powerful enough, or wealthy enough, to establish schools, or to employ teachers on their own behalf, but who are compelled to make use of those schools which they find existing in the neighbourhood. Under those circumstances it is natural, perhaps it is inevitable, that those who have to send their children to the school of a denomination which is not their own should feel, in the first instance, some little jealousy and some little distrust of what is there to be done, and the inference and the moral which I draw are these—that where such a state of things exists those who represent the great majority are the more bound, alike in justice and in policy, scrupulously and honestly to respect the rights of those who belong to that minority of which I speak.

If that principle is adhered to, if that denominational system which exists to-day is worked as we have a right to expect that it shall be worked, in a spirit of moderation and fairness, and of justice, and if in addition we exert ourselves, each in his own place, to fill up those lamentable gaps in our educational arrangements the existence of which we still

have to regret—if, I say, we do that, I see no reason why the present system should not continue in force for a very long time indeed, and, for my own part, I say without hesitation that I hope that it will do so. I believe it is the best system, because it gives a greater stimulus to individual action, it gives greater play to individual freedom, and it shows a greater respect for individual rights and feelings than could be done under any other system more directly and immediately connected with the State.

Reverting to this particular school, I think we have not been at all too early in undertaking to build it. We must expect to see within a few years an influx of inhabitants here such as will materially alter the appearance and the character of this district. To some extent this has been the case already. Of course, there are many of us who may think that all is not unmixed gain or pleasure in that suburban condition to which we are coming, when long lines of villas, not all of the most beautiful or ornamental architecture, shall replace those green fields which we have been accustomed to see. There may be some of us who may look back with regret to past times—to the days when railways were unknown and undreamed of, when all over the face of this country very large hedges and ditches, and a vast multitude of them, divided a vast multitude of very small fields, and when Huyton itself consisted of little more than a group of cottages, mostly thatched, and mostly mud-walled, which clustered round the old parish church. But those primitive times are gone. Whether we wish it or not, we could not recall them; perhaps with our new habits and ideas we should not all feel ourselves very comfortable if we could. We have to provide for the present and for the future. We have to make preparation for those numerous guests who, invited or not, are coming out to us, and who will seek in the comparative quiet and pure air of this neighbourhood for an escape from the smoke and dirt and noise of the great city close by.

Well, I say this school is a beginning of preparation for the reception of those who are coming, and it is a beginning

which has not been made too early. I rejoice to hear that the school will be opened without any debt upon it. I do not believe that there is a more inconvenient or a more dangerous practice than that of starting a local institution, of whatever character, however useful, and however necessary, encumbered with a load of debt, of which very likely it may not shake itself clear for a generation or more. Well, ladies and gentlemen, my voice, and that fierce sun which is beating upon you, both warn me that it is pretty nearly time to conclude. I will only add one word or two of hints, which may, perhaps, not be necessary to those whom I address. I hope that those by whom this school is to be managed will bear in mind—and I am sure they will—that children, and especially very young children, want a great deal of play as well as a little work; that they will remember that little legs easily get fidgety when sitting still, and that young and tender brains cannot bear without injury more than a very small amount of continuous attention. I hope they will remember that not merely kindness—I do not speak of that, because every teacher worth his salt shows, or means to show, kindness to children—but that courtesy of manner and strict justice in those little matters which make up the sum of school life are quite as much appreciated, even by the youngest among us, as they are by grown people. And I hope, further, that they will bear this in mind, that what we want in a school like this is not mere cram—it is not the effort and strain of an overtaxed memory, it is not a precocious development of individual talent in this or that particular case.

What we want to produce, or rather to develop, is the largest number of healthy brains in healthy bodies, the cultivation of a habit of patient and persevering industry, guided by a sense of personal duty directed to useful ends; above all, we desire that moral and industrial as well as intellectual culture, the diffusion of which among all classes of the population, from the highest to the lowest, is the best guarantee we can have for the continuance of our national prosperity, and our best security against national disorder.

XXX

FARMING—THE LABOUR QUESTION—GAME LAWS—LEASES—COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

PRESTON: OCTOBER 5, 1872

IN bringing together this Farmers' Club, we are following an example which has been set—and, as I believe, usefully set—by various other counties. The formation of these bodies has been too recent to enable us to judge of their working, but I may say generally that they have two objects in view—one, to give a fair hearing to all such persons as may have practical suggestions to offer on agricultural matters, or on the mutual relations of the various classes engaged in the cultivation of the soil; the other, which I hold to be at least equally important, to bring together, for the discussion of all such new ideas as may be proposed, an audience which shall be experienced and critical, so that if, as will happen in the best-regulated public meetings, notions should be put forward which are plausible on the face of them, but impracticable in their working, they may go forth to the general public accompanied with the comments of those who have heard them, and who are better able to estimate their real value than the mass of outsiders can be. The landed interest, whatever else it may complain of, cannot possibly complain of neglect. Everybody wants to do something to it, or with it, but unluckily many of the loudest talkers on matters connected with land are people whose agricultural knowledge is about on a par with that of the cockney on his travels, who said he thought he should know malt from barley if he saw them growing together. Farming on paper is one thing, farming

in practice is another; and when all the world has got a theory of some sort about the soil, it is just as well that some of the talking, at least, should be done by parties who have not merely got up their knowledge for the occasion, as a lawyer gets up cases from a brief.

For myself, I come here to learn, not to teach. I am quite ready, and I hope we shall all be ready, to profit by hints that may be thrown out; but while we ought to be ready to do that, there is another duty which must not be neglected. I mean the duty of inquiring carefully and speaking out plainly when something is proposed to us that may turn out to be only a popular and plausible delusion. There is so much clap-trap, so much moral cowardice, so much dislike in the present day of hazarding on any subject an opinion that may not find general favour, that you will see every day honest and cultivated men accept in theory, and publicly announce, ideas in which they have not the slightest real faith, and which they would be very sorry to apply in any matter where their own interests were concerned. We must not shrink on one side or the other from a clear assertion of what we conceive our relative rights and duties to be, though it does not in any way follow that a wise man or a generous man will push his legal, or even his moral, rights to their full extent. We must not hesitate to condemn benevolently intended schemes if they will not bear the test of actual work; and we must recollect that there is in this world no more fertile source of quarrels and ill-feeling than the attempt to cover up under vague and ambiguous phrases, expressing kindly sentiment, but expressing little else, the existence of real doubt, or of real difference, as to what each party in a contract is entitled to. The result of that kind of vagueness and uncertainty is exorbitant claims on the one hand, indiscriminate rejection or cutting down of them on the other; and in the end, not improbably, a settlement of which the principle is rather that each party should have half of what he expects than that either should have all to which he has a right.

The subjects which will come before this club are many—

some of them I will name by-and-by; but there are three or four which suggest themselves as the most likely to be discussed, and the most important; and on these, with your permission, I will say a few words first. One of these is the Labour question. A great deal has been spoken and written lately about the scarcity of labour, and the consequent raising of wages. Now, on that matter it is hardly possible to make any remark, unless of so vague a character that it can serve no useful purpose, which will be applicable to other localities than one's own, or which elsewhere may not be misunderstood. Every county has its peculiar customs and circumstances: and as has been said of a battle, no one can describe more than that part of the field in which he himself happens to be engaged.

One question I would ask. Are we not a little hasty in speaking as if a great permanent rise in the cost of English labour had taken or was taking place? It may be so; but we know this—that an exceptional development of trade and manufactures has created an exceptional demand for hands; that such periods of suddenly enhanced prosperity seldom go on long without a check, and that it is by no means proved that when that check occurs—and some people think it is not far off even now—the demand for labour may not subside to very nearly its former level. We cannot generalise safely from the experience of a year or two. It is not four years since many people—sensible people as well as kind-hearted people—were crying out for State help to send out of the country the surplus labour for which we could find no use at home.

When I notice the change since 1868, I am compelled to ask what there is to prevent the ebb from succeeding to the flow—what should hinder the pendulum from swinging back again to its old position. Of course, I may be wrong—I am suggesting doubts rather than asserting propositions of which I feel certain; but I shall not easily believe in that social and economical revolution with which the press is so busy, until I see one of two things—either that the number of yearly emigrants from these islands equals, or approaches, the

natural yearly increase of population, or that the working class here use the same means as the French peasantry habitually do to avoid being burdened with more mouths than they can find food for. The last of these two conditions is so utterly improbable, considering the ideas and feelings of our people, that I may safely put it aside; and as to the first I am not aware that there has been any perceptible decrease as yet in the rate at which our population grows. Nobody can feel unkindly to those poor fellows who are only doing the best they know to better themselves—but I suspect that in the majority of cases they have miscalculated their strength, and will not do themselves much good. In these parts our troubles of that kind are fewer, though we may have had our share. For many years past the competition of the towns has raised wages to a higher level here than in the south; the condition of the labourer is better to begin with; and though there may be some temporary difficulty to contend with, I do not think the farmers in Lancashire need fear any permanent scarcity of hands. But even if that scarcity were to continue, and to increase, it would be no reason for giving in.

It has been pointed out by a very competent authority upon such subjects that of all countries England supplies to the world the cheapest manufactured goods, and of all countries England pays the highest for the labour that supplies them. It is a question to a great extent of using mechanical means; we are only beginning, comparatively speaking, to do that in farming, and it is impossible to foretell what economies and what improvements may be possible in that direction. Meanwhile, it is undoubtedly desirable to do what we reasonably can to keep our labourers with us. I would never discourage any young fellow from emigrating if his mind were really set upon it, and if he had an idea of what was before him—indeed, I have very often helped men to go; but unless English labourers are a good deal stupider than I take them to be, they will find out that emigration is a lottery; that the emigrants mostly have a rough time to go through; and

perhaps it may strike them that the people who are crying most loudly to them to take themselves out of the country are not working for their interest—are very little concerned, indeed, whether they live or starve when once across the sea—but are simply trying to get them out of the way, that there may be higher wages for those who stop behind. As to migration from one county to another—especially from the south of England to the north—that is a process which will go on of itself, and does not require to be artificially stimulated. The tendency of wages is necessarily towards equality within a limited area. But it is obvious that a movement of that kind cuts two ways—if it tends to raise wages in one district, it tends to lower them, or to prevent them rising, in another. Well, what are we to do for them at home? One of the favourite schemes of the day is to turn them into farmers, or rather into fractions of a farmer, by adopting what is called the plan of co-operative association, and giving the soil to be cultivated by the actual workers upon it.

Now, I am not at all a disbeliever in the co-operative principle within certain limits. Where shop-keeping is concerned it has succeeded admirably well; in manufacturing business the success has been less decided; and to put the matter quite fairly, I do not think we are as yet in a position to say—since nothing except actual experience will determine this—in which of the very various kinds of industrial employment it is likely to succeed, and in which it will fail. It is clear that associations of men, individually poor, will be at a disadvantage in two cases—one where a large command of capital is required, and where they may have to lie out of their money for a long while; the other, where risks are to be run, where immediate decisions must be taken, and where, therefore, it is necessary that the firms directing operations should act with that entire freedom which a man can hardly feel when he is dealing with the property of other people. In the case of farming, it seems to me that the first of these difficulties is, if not fatal, yet very serious.

indeed. There can be no tolerable farming without capital; a body of labourers clearly have not got capital of their own, and as they have no available security to offer, I do not see where they are to get it.

I am aware that instances have occurred where benevolent landowners have themselves advanced the sum required—but that is charity, and not business. In the first place it is clear that landowners, as a body, would not be able to take that course. In the next place, even if they had the money, it would be a very speculative investment; and besides that, farming with capital of which every shilling is borrowed is not, for the occupier, a safe and satisfactory process. Moreover, there is another consideration which philanthropists are apt to forget. It is very well, and it is very just, to argue that men never work so hard as when they have a direct personal interest in the result; that is excellent doctrine for prosperous times, or where there is a reserve to fall back upon. But farmers have losses as well as gains, bad years as well as good years; and inasmuch as labourers must live, and as they have nothing laid by, it seems as if, whenever crops were exceptionally bad, or prices exceptionally low, the experiments of rural co-operation run great risk of breaking down. Still, I do not say that it should not be tried, or that in some form it may not ultimately answer, only, with our present experience, I should advise no one to put more money into it than he can afford conveniently to lose. But why should not the question be practically tested? There are plenty of estates in the market, the trading co-operative associations of this country are very numerous, they have a good deal of money made, and their supporters are enthusiastically zealous in the cause. A very little experience is better than a great deal of talk; let them try a few farms, and see whether they can work them to advantage on their principle. If they succeed, nobody will grudge them their success; if they fail, we are only where we were. There is a modified form of co-operation, which consists in paying labourers proportionately to the

profits made on the farm, and some plan of that kind has lately been recommended to us by very high Parliamentary authority. I think, however, that it is liable to a good deal of difficulty. In the first place it is not always easy for the farmer to know exactly what his profits on the year's business are, and still less easy for him to prove it, as he would be bound to do, to the satisfaction of his men. In the next place, it does not seem to be founded on any principle of justice that I can understand, that a ploughman or a carter's earnings should depend on the state of the crops or of the markets. No doubt he would be willing enough to receive a bonus in good years, but he would not at all like a corresponding deduction from his earnings in bad years. And yet it is not easy to see how you can have one without the other. A partnership where the gains are divided among all the partners, and the losses fall entirely on one, is a very one-sided concern. Of course, if all that is meant is that wages are to be raised when the employers can afford it, these objections do not apply; but that is quite a different thing from making wages vary, according to a fixed rule, with profits.

While on this question I would recommend it to your consideration whether it is not both just and politic to distinguish, more than is usually done, between individual labourers, as regards the rate at which they are paid. One man's work is worth half as much again as that of another; it is a discouragement to the really good worker not to have that difference recognised; and, looking at it in another point of view, by valuing each man's labour separately you encourage the spirit of individual energy and ambition rather than of combination and collective action. The strong and the energetic will not feel, under such a system, that, in order to rise themselves, they must drag after them the dead weight of those who have neither strength nor energy. And as they lead the rest, when you satisfy them you go a long way towards satisfying all. Every generation has its favourite ideas—co-operation is the universal medicine of the present day. Five-and-twenty years ago the theory used to be that

if you could only give to every labourer an allotment on which he could grow produce, either for sale or for his own use, you would have made a great step towards improving his condition. I think there was reason and sense in that view, though more stress may have been laid upon it than it would fairly bear. There is no doubt that to hold a bit of land in that way attaches a man to the soil, and that it is, so to speak, a savings bank for his labour. On the other hand, it is argued with force that if the allotment is far off from the house, and if it exceed a very moderate size, the labourer is drawn off from his regular work to attend to it, and, being divided between two employments, neither does as well for himself nor for his employer as he otherwise would. It is a fair matter for discussion, and I hope we may have some light thrown upon it. That every cottage should be in good repair, and should have a garden attached to it, are rules which I need not stop to enforce upon you.

Another subject much talked of in the south is whether labourers' cottages should be held direct from the landlord or leased by him to the farmer who holds the adjoining land. I hold, for my own part, that, as a general rule, subject to exception in the case of large and distant farms, the landowner had better not allow the control over them to pass out of his own hands. On the other hand, he may reasonably make it a condition that those whom he houses at a very unremunerative rent should be actually and habitually workers on his estate. He is not bound to provide cheap cottages for the mechanics of the neighbouring districts unless he profits by their labour. It is enough if he provides them, or the associations which act for them, with facilities for building on their own account. Those whom, according to our customs, he is bound to house, must be those who work for him or his tenantry; and if they cease to fulfil that condition, they cannot complain of being replaced by others who will.

Piece-work, or payment by results, is a valuable stimulus to exertion where it can be introduced. It is open to one objection, that the quality of the work done is apt to suffer, in cases

where faulty work cannot be detected by inspection. Still, the principle is sound, because it gives the worker an interest in his occupation, and creates rivalry. Where men are paid by time only, it is an unpopular thing among them for one to do more than the rest. Exceptional energy is discouraged, and men reasonably ask, 'Why should I work harder than my neighbour, since the profits will go into my employer's pocket, and not into mine?'

You will expect me to say something on the question of game. It does not much interest me personally, and I shall be quite ready to acquiesce in whatever arrangements either law or custom may sanction. But where there is a good deal of prejudice on both sides, a word or two in a spirit of at least intended impartiality may not be quite useless. There are two issues involved—one, what it is wise for every landlord to do of his own free will; the other, what Parliament ought to do on the subject, if it does anything.

As to the first point, I do not hesitate to say that in many, perhaps in most, parts of the country, game preserving has been carried a great deal too far. If a man wants to carry it on to the extent that some landowners do, let him take what land he requires into his own hands, and bear the expense and the loss himself. But when we come to speak of legislation, I think that if I were a farmer I would consider twice before I asked for the repeal of the Game Laws. First, because a change of that kind in the law would naturally lead to a general revaluation of farms, and farms in England are habitually let at a lower rate than they would fetch if competed for in open market. But, secondly, and perhaps this is the more important reason, because in a country like this you never can have, you never will have, a stringent and effective law of trespass. The public would neither consent to its being passed nor allow it to be enforced if it were passed. And in the case of a Lancashire farmer who lives in a populous district with many large towns near him, and lots of idle lads about, I suspect he would find that the liability to have his hedges broken and his fields trampled by every set of young fellows

who took it into their heads to see if they could find a partridge or a hare on his ground would be a good deal worse than any occasional damage to crops to which he is now exposed. Against mischief of that kind he would have no practical remedy, or none which would not cost him more in legal expenses than he could possibly get back as damages. That is a part of the question which has not been much noticed, and I think it deserves attention.

Various plans have been put forward for giving the game —ground game, at least—to the tenant instead of the landlord. But all of them that I have seen are open to this objection: that if the landlord and tenant are to contract freely for the letting of farms, it is impossible for the law to prevent the landlord from reserving the right of shooting; and if, as some people contend, such a reservation is to be made illegal, then you are landed in this absurdity—that the tenant, who may shoot on his own account, may also let the shooting to any human being whom he pleases to select, with the single exception of his own landlord. On the whole, I think the matter will be found a very awkward one to deal with by law; and what I should wish to see—what I hope to see—is that by moderation on both sides the necessity for any large legislative measure may be averted. I am convinced that if landowners and their friends would be content with the kind of sport which satisfied their grandfathers, or even their fathers, up to thirty or forty years ago, there would be very little controversy about it. The tendency of opinion is in that direction now, and I hope it will continue so. For my own part, I would much rather sacrifice game altogether than quarrel with my tenants; but I certainly have not found that objection to it, within moderate limits, which is often talked about, and I have been asked before now, when about to kill down hares on a farm, to leave a few for coursing.

There are two other matters which we may have to discuss: the question of leases, and the question of compensation to tenants for unexhausted improvements. Now, as to leases, I will tell you exactly what I think. I hold that any improving

tenant who wants a lease of fourteen or twenty-one years may fairly be allowed to have one; and I am not in favour of clogging leases with more than a few simple conditions. But then the bargain must not be all on one side. If the landowner consents to put his farm out of his own control for a term of years, he must be free morally, as he is free legally, to renew the contract or not, at the end of the term, as he thinks best. Probably he will think it best, but he has a right to his option. I lay stress on that, because I have seen in the papers cases where it was made a matter of great complaint that the holder of such a lease was not allowed to renew it, the proprietor of the soil having made other arrangements.

I confess I cannot see the justice of those complaints. Where leases are resorted to, the relation between owner and occupier becomes one of contract, and neither can fairly claim as a matter of right anything beyond what is in the contract. In practice I cannot call to mind that on the estates with which I am connected any demand for additional security of tenure has ever been addressed to me, and I gather that, so far as this part of the country is concerned, there is no particular feeling on the subject. So far from landowners using their power harshly in respect of changes of tenantry, I think they may more justly be accused of erring in an opposite direction. Many an incapable and nearly insolvent tenant is kept on from the natural reluctance to break an old connection. And though that is, perhaps, a weakness and a mistake, it is a mistake which we all commit, and a weakness of which nobody is much ashamed. As to claims for unexhausted improvements, it is scarcely possible in the time at our disposal to discuss the limits within which they are just. In some cases —as, for instance, where artificial manures have been used— I apprehend that these claims are regulated by a local custom which is well understood. Where a tenant has a lease, they generally will, and to my mind they always should, be matters of arrangement between him and the landlord. It is not the landowner's interest to have his farm run out during the last

four years of the lease, and it is not the tenant's interest to run it out, if he can either secure the value of what he has put in or a renewal of his tenancy. They are both gainers by coming to an agreement, and I do not see that either fresh legislation or the intervention of any third party is necessary. In the case of a yearly tenant the claim is certainly stronger; and if in cases of that kind grievances arise, as I have read in the newspapers, I think the question of legal protection is a very fair one to raise. But I speak with no great confidence, for in my experience no dispute has ever arisen on these points.

In Ireland it used to be pleaded with truth that the tenant did most of the work of permanent improvement on the estate —buildings included—and that, therefore, he had a right to the value of them on leaving. But in this country, at least in Lancashire, all works of that kind are landlords' works, and the Irish claim does not arise. The obvious remedy for grievances or misunderstandings on this question of improvements is that before they are undertaken by the tenant in each instance, there should be a definite agreement whether they are to be paid for or not, and how their value is to be estimated. Speaking as a landowner, I am not in the least afraid of *bonâ fide* claims on the ground of improvement; but I suspect that some at least of those who put them forward have got in their minds a very different kind of claim from the Irish demand for compensation, as it is called, for disturbance: in other words, the infliction of a fine on the landlord for putting a bad tenant out and a better one in. That demand never seemed to me reasonable, even in Irish legislation, and in England it would be equally without precedent and without justification. And that brings me back to what I said at first—the importance of a clear definition of mutual rights. All the miserable Irish trouble about tenant-right, of which we have probably not seen the end yet, arose, in the first instance, from the muddle-headed way in which both parties went on, laying down no fixed rule, acting on no definite principle, but settling each case as it arose, or leaving it un-

settled, until the confusion had become inextricable, and popular violence had practically superseded law.

We shall not fall into that mistake, but it is one great use of such discussions as ours ought to be, that vague and unsound notions get swept away, and that we come to see clearly what others have a right to expect from us, and what we are entitled to claim in return. It rests with you whether this Society is going to be of real use or not. You have an immense range of subjects to deal with—try to deal with them briefly, practically, thoughtfully. With our system of newspapers the most obscure person, who is master of his subject, may start an idea that will spread through the whole country; and if for every grain of truth we should happen to produce a good deal of chaff, why, the chaff blows away in the fresh air of controversy—the grain, be it much or little, remains behind.

XXXI

THRIFT—PENNY BANKS

London: May 9, 1873

Some of you who have come to this meeting to hear what we have to say, and who have listened to the report of the secretary, may, perhaps, be inclined to ask—and it is a very natural question—'What is the use of another Society? Are we not already overdone with Associations of every sort and kind—good, bad, and indifferent; and can it be either necessary or desirable to add to the number?' That is the question which would naturally have occurred to me had I come here as a stranger. I suppose, therefore, it may have occurred to many of you, and I will try and answer it to the best of my power. But I shall be shorter than I otherwise would have been because we have—and I rejoice to see it—the support on this platform of many eminent persons who can speak with greater authority than I on this subject, and are better qualified to give an opinion on the working of this Society.

I do not apprehend that any one is likely to dispute this general proposition, that one of our weak points, taking this nation as a whole, is a singular want of frugality and prudence in private affairs. The old proverb says, 'Plenty and pains seldom go together,' and possibly it is because we make our money faster than most other countries that we spend it faster. The Americans equal us, perhaps exceed us, in both respects, and it may be that a certain absence of caution, a certain reluctance to contemplate the possibility of things going wrong, a vague confidence that the future must be even

more prosperous than the present, are traits of character inherent in, and inseparable from, the nature of a progressive and energetic people. At any rate, the characteristic of which I speak is not a new one. Defoe notices it in a remarkable pamphlet on what we should now call the organisation of charity, which reads, bating only a few quaint and obsolete phrases, as if it had been written yesterday instead of nearly 200 years ago. He says :—

'Good husbandry is no English virtue; it may have been brought over, and in some places where it has been planted it has thriven well enough, but 'tis a foreign species—it neither loves nor is beloved by an Englishman.'

And he goes on :—

'This observation I have made between foreigners and Englishmen, that where an Englishman earns 20*s.* a week, and but just lives, as we call it, a Dutchman grows rich, and leaves his children in very good condition.'

I just observe in passing that 20*s.* a week in Defoe's time would be about equal, taking the altered value of money, to 60*s.* a week now. Again, he says :—

'There is nothing more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pocket full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drink till 'tis all gone, and perhaps himself in debt; and ask him in his cups what he intends, he'll tell you honestly he'll drink as long as it lasts, and then go to work for more.' [1]

Now, I do not venture to use such plain speaking as Defoe. I hope things are better now; but I quote these passages to show that the same tendencies among our people which those who know them best most deeply regret in our own day existed two centuries ago in full force, and we must not, therefore, either talk as if we had a new evil to deal with, a creation of recent ideas and times, or, on the other hand, as if it were one which we could reasonably expect to get rid

[1] 'Giving Alms no Charity and Employing the Poor a Grievance to the Nation.' Writings of the Author of the *True-born Englishman*, 1705, Vol. II. pp. 446-448.

of easily in a few years. For my own part, I am a great believer in the permanence of national character. I hold that you may modify it in some degree, you may soften down its peculiarities and correct its faults, yet you cannot radically alter it, and in our own case, I must add, I see no reason why we should wish that were possible.

Our English people have always been, as they are now, patient of labour, anxious to raise themselves; not envious of those who succeed (and that is a great matter); willing to make great exertions in pursuit of wealth, but less able, in general, to keep it when acquired than acquire it; and rather too much inclined to consider the squandering of capital as a sign of a generous disposition, and the propensity to save as evidence of selfishness and meanness. I do not waste your time in stopping to refute that fallacy. I only notice the fact that it is popular and widespread. I do not suppose that we shall change; and I must add this, that, in what I have said, I am not at all confining myself to those whom we vaguely describe as the working classes. Rich and poor, we are all tarred with one brush; and I utterly disclaim the offensive and ungracious office of lecturing only those who have very little to spare on the duty of laying by for the future, while the same duty is notoriously neglected by many thousands in classes where its performance would be comparatively easy. What we contend for is this, that habits of prudence and forethought in money matters are far from being common in this country, and that to endeavour to encourage them is one of the most practical forms which a really thoughtful benevolence can assume. Look, for one thing, at the working of the County Courts. Why, one-half their business would be swept away at a stroke if the custom of buying on credit were to disappear, or, admitting that, in the uncertainty of the labour market, it cannot be expected to disappear altogether, if at least it were to become the exception and not the rule.

Look, again, at the popular complaints—often very well-founded complaints—about the adulteration of articles of

food bought by the poor. What is the explanation of frauds of that kind being possible and even habitual? Why, as often as not, the cause is—one cause at least is—that the customer is in debt; that he must take the article which is offered him at the price at which it is offered, and that, if he refuses, not only will he get nothing else instead, but he knows that he may be county-courted for a debt which he cannot pay. There is the whole secret, as I take it, of the success of those institutions which are called co-operative stores. There is no magic in the name or in the thing; they can sell cheaply because they make no bad debts, and they make no bad debts because those who come to them have no option except to pay ready money.

You may educate a man as highly as you please; you may give him the franchise, and call upon him to exercise it as often as you think fit; you may provide the best newspapers in the world to tell him what is going on, and museums and galleries without end to cultivate his taste; but no amount of political freedom, or of literary culture, or refinement, will carry with them the sense of independence or of self-respect so long as he knows that he is in somebody else's power, that he has on his shoulders a burden of debt from which he cannot shake himself loose. That is a slavery almost as degrading and, I am afraid, almost as common as the kindred slavery of drunkenness. And I may say, in passing, that if temperate habits are likely to keep a man from debt, as the advocates of temperance are always and very truly telling us; so, on the other hand, there is nothing more likely to create intemperate habits than the perpetual worry and anxiety of pecuniary embarrassments, while nothing can more effectually confirm in any man the resolution to keep sober than the desire to lay by, in youth and middle life, what may be a provision for sickness, for old age, for the widow whom he may leave, or for the children who may come after him.

What we contend for, briefly, is this—that a very large part of the suffering which we all deplore is caused by want of habits of economy and forethought; that where

people have been accustomed for many years to live from hand to mouth, it is all but impossible, as a rule, to induce them to change their habits; that the habit of saving, so as to be beforehand with the world, if it is to be acquired at all, must be acquired early; but that it is not so acquired, as a rule, simply because in very few places has any serious attempt been made to teach it. It is not taught by precept at school; it is not taught by example at home. Again, we say that it is not enough to establish savings banks and expect that people will go to them. We must bring the banks to the people. If we do not do that the system is faulty, just in the same way as the system of drainage is faulty in some newly-built places where you have an excellent sewer running under the streets, but where nobody has taken care to see that the house drains have any connection with it.

Those who are practically conversant with friendly societies, penny banks, and institutions of that kind could give you curious illustrations of the willingness of people to avail themselves of these things if they are brought literally home to their doors, and of their indifference and dislike to use them if the using them involves going only a few hundred yards out of their way. One friend has said to me, 'The people I look after would be willing enough to use the Post Office Savings Bank, but it is a little way off, across the road, and they can't take the trouble of going over to it.' In the evidence taken before the Friendly Societies Commission, it is stated by a witness that 25 per cent. was allowed by a friendly society in Scotland to persons who would bring their own subscriptions to the office. But though we generally credit our Scotch countrymen with being pretty careful of their own interests, it is stated that this allowance was not taken advantage of; the depositors preferred paying one shilling to the collector when he called rather than walking a little way and paying only ninepence. I believe that in the north of England towns a very similar state of things exists, and that many friendly societies find it impossible to get on without making that enormous allowance, 25 per cent., to the collector.

We want to try and remedy that state of things. We want to make it as easy for a working man to invest his spare cash in a savings bank or in a safe insurance or a deferred annuity for his old age, as it is now to invest it in a glass of beer. To accomplish the latter object he has seldom far to go; and we believe that there are thousands who would be glad enough, when they get their wages, to put themselves out of the way of temptation so far as a part of their earnings is concerned, who would gladly hand them over to any collector whom they could trust if they were able to do so on the spot, but who, if that opportunity is lost, are not likely to have anything to lay by next day or the day after. One of our objects is to suggest and encourage the establishment of banks for small savings, commonly called penny banks, in every place of business where many men are employed, the collector to be appointed by the men themselves, and if recognised, as he probaby would be, by the Post Office, he would also act as the agent for insurances and deferred annuities under that department. At present neither of these two useful arrangements has become at all common in the artisan class—not, I believe, from any prejudice against either one or the other, but simply because the idea is new and has not yet made its way.

I am told that in one place where machinery of this kind has been established by the Society's agency and advice, in the first day 80 men out of 400 joined it, depositing 6*l.*; very shortly afterwards the number had increased to 135, and it is still increasing. Now, in this instance, all the facilities that now exist for laying by existed before, with the exception of one, and that one missing link made all the difference. Formerly it was necessary for all the men to go to the collector, and under the new system the collector goes to them. That shows you what may be done. It is no good to argue, 'There are the savings banks; people can use them or let them alone as they please.' That may be enough to cover the responsibility of the State; but what we want is that they shall not let them alone, that their attention shall be

called to this duty as it is to other duties—that they shall be invited and assisted to do what, uninvited and unassisted, only a small fraction of them will think of doing—in short, that employers and all others who have social influence shall help those under them to keep out of distress, as they already do, most willingly and most liberally, assist to help them when they fall into distress. I know it is sometimes said that employers—or some of them—do not wish to see their men with a lot of money in hand because then they would be too independent. That is a selfish calculation at the best, and I believe very few make it, but it seems to me also a miscalculation. It is just the man who has something laid by, and who is adding to it every week, who is most reluctant to throw away his earnings by a foolish quarrel with the employer. Saving men are safe men, and to make a 'conservative' (I do not use the word in a political but in a social sense) there is no better receipt than a balance at his banker's.

Now, gentlemen, I leave it to others to tell you more in detail of the little work that has been done, and the great deal of work which we hope will be done, by this new Association. It has started on a small scale. Its existence is experimental only. Its promoters have not tried to push it into notice by any of those arts of puffing with which we are unfortunately only too well acquainted. But, so far as it has gone, it has found support in many quarters, and I believe it will not be allowed to drop. No doubt it has its own special difficulties to contend against. The most useful objects of social exertion are not always, perhaps not usually, those which excite the most popular enthusiasm. There is something in the relief of individual distress which gratifies our sense of compassion, and perhaps something else which flatters our self-love. Neither of these sentiments is excited by the exertions which we make to keep men from falling into difficulties, although exertions of that kind are often the more really and permanently beneficial of the two. You do not require to be told that the best help is

self-help; that no liberality or charity on the part of the rich can, in the long run, supersede the necessity for prudence in the masses; or that benevolence will always find enough to do in dealing with cases of misfortune that could not be prevented or foreseen. It never has done more, and it never can do more, than mitigate in a small degree the sufferings with which it deals. To be dealt with effectually they must be dealt with by other agencies, and I do not think it is flattering to the patriotism of an Englishman to see that in France, in Belgium, in Holland, in Germany, where wages are lower than here, and subsistence in general not easier, there is a vast reserve of national wealth in the hands of the working class, while of ours, better paid, better clothed, and better fed, there is far too large a portion in a condition nearly resembling that which Defoe described as existing at the end of the seventeenth century.

I have not touched on one branch of this subject, though its importance is very great, because I could not do justice to it in a few words—I mean the immense discouragement to prudence which arises from the insecurity and bad management of many institutions in which the savings of the poorer classes are largely invested. That is delicate ground to tread on, and it is a question of much difficulty to what extent and in what form the State should interfere to protect individuals against schemes which are plausible and unsound. It would be a grave responsibility if our agents were to go about saying, 'Such-and-such a friendly society or provident society is insecure; do not trust it;' but we can say the converse of that; we can tell people, 'Whatever else is shaky, Governments funds are safe; and while you are dealing with the Post Office Banks, or annuities, or insurances, though you may get less for your money than is promised you elsewhere, you are safe not to lose it.' That is probably all we can do in the way of caution, and, though it may not be enough in all respects, it is at least safe and useful so far as it goes.

XXXII

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS—EDUCATION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB

Annual Examination of the Deaf and Dumb Institution, Manchester, June 9, 1873

If anybody doubts the value or the usefulness of this institution, after what he has seen and heard, it is not easy to discover what kind of proof will meet his requirements. The manner in which the whole examination was conducted showed to my mind that there has been no special previous preparation for this occasion, and that the results we have witnessed do not proceed from what is vulgarly called 'cram.' That the building is convenient and comfortable; that the children are clean, healthy, and happy; that they are well cared for and well taught, are matters on which you can form your own opinion. There is, however, one remark of a general character which I may put before you, and it may possibly not have occurred to everybody here. Only those who are practically conversant with what are called charitable institutions can realise the immense difficulty of making sure that you are really doing more good than harm. Nature says to most of us, 'Work, or you will starve.' Humanity cannot bear to witness starvation or suffering, and we all do what we can to remit or to lighten the penalty when it has been incurred. But it is not always easy to do that without lessening the stimulus to exertion, and so indirectly creating more suffering than you relieve. If you were to go into the streets and take up, and care for, and educate every boy whom you found running loose there, which is a sort of thing a great many

kind-hearted people would willingly do, you would have a great deal to say in defence of your attempt. After all, it is not the boys' fault if they are neglected at home, and it is hard that they should suffer for the default of others; but, as a matter of fact, you would be holding out, as everybody can see, the strongest possible inducements to lazy and rascally parents to turn their children adrift in order to get them educated and lodged and fed for nothing. And so, as a result of your kind act, you would have probably in a year or two three times as many vagrant lads as before.

Hospitals in London of late years have been enormously multiplied by the liberality of the public. I know there is an outcry, not, so far as I can judge, unreasonable, that they are used and abused by thousands of persons who are in no distress at all, who could pay, and ought to pay, for their own medical relief, but who find that they can get it for nothing, and have no shame in doing so. Everywhere you are met with the old paradox, the old difficulty, how those that deserve help least often want it most. Yet how difficult it is to give that help to those who want it most without causing reasonable and actual discouragement to others who have struggled hard to avoid wanting it, and who have succeeded with infinite trouble in just holding their own. It is a difficulty that meets you in various shapes. Children of paupers, for instance—who would contend that they ought not to have every chance of health given them that good food and lodging can find? Yet it is not altogether unnatural that the struggling ratepayer should say, 'It is hard that I have to pay to give comforts to these children which I can't afford for my own, and that the best off should be those who have least shame in throwing their burdens on other people's backs.' You see the same thing in another form in families. What is commoner than a father or mother of possibly two or three brothers and sisters beggared in the attempt, perhaps an unsuccessful attempt, to rescue some one, the black sheep of the family, from the consequences of his own folly? What are you to say to such cases? If they were wrong to sacrifice themselves, then our

best feelings are only given us to delude and to mislead; if they are right, then to do nothing, or attempt nothing for yourself, is the best reason, as the world goes, for expecting your neighbour to do everything for you.

These are paradoxes over which I have been often puzzled, and many wiser people than I, and without seeing any altogether satisfactory solution. But you may ask me, 'What have they to do with this school, and why do you mention them here?' Well, I will tell you why. Because it seems that almost entire freedom from the risk I am speaking of—the risk of charity abused—is one of the very first recommendations of an institution such as this is. You may multiply paupers indefinitely by making pauperism less disagreeable, and removing from it all idea of social degradation; but no amount of care or comfort, or even luxury, with which you could surround deaf and dumb children would increase the number of deaf and dumb by a single individual. The same principle applies to asylums for the blind, for idiots, and those in any way incurably afflicted. No one enters into any one of those classes of his own free will; it is neither his fault nor the fault of his parents that he is what he is; and the contingency of having a child so circumstanced is one so rare, so peculiar, so out of all ordinary calculation, that parents cannot be reasonably blamed for not having anticipated or provided for it. That is, I think, a sound economical justification of institutions like the present—one which will bear the test of reasoning as well as of sentiment. You are not seeking the principle of self-help when you assist those whom Nature has precluded from helping themselves. If every blind person, and every deaf and dumb person, could have the benefit of the best care and teaching which society could give, you could not thereby incur the slightest risk of making either the one or the other infirmity more common. You are absolutely on safe ground. All you have to take care of is that, of two candidates for admission, that one shall be first admitted who can show at once the most urgent want and the most reasonable prospect of benefits by the care

bestowed. It is a good system also by which pupils who pay the greater part of the costs are mixed with those who contribute very little.

There is another consideration to be borne in mind, that no class of afflicted persons gain so much by teaching and treatment as the deaf and dumb. The blind, however terrible may be their loss, are not cut off from the first of social and intellectual wants—communication with the rest of mankind; but inability to exchange a thought or a feeling except through the slow medium of ordinary writing (a knowledge of which can only be acquired with difficulty) is a condition, I should imagine, more trying to the ordinary human being than blindness itself. It is not good for men to be alone, still worse for women; and there can be no deeper solitude than that which is produced by the physical inability to speak or to hear. The process by which, in that respect, art has succeeded in removing the defects of Nature is, to my mind, as wonderful intellectually as it is useful in its results. We have seen to-day something of what can be performed by it, and heartily I congratulate the teachers of this school on the way in which their work has been done.

I do not see why I should trouble you with details with which you are probably more familiar than I am; but I would remind you that this institution has now arrived within a very few days of half a century of useful, although comparatively unostentatious, existence. It has received in the course of that half-century upwards of a thousand pupils. The number at present within the walls is about 150, and I apprehend that more could be taken if the means were forthcoming. Even in a money point of view an institution like this is a great saving to the community, for of those who are brought within its walls very few probably would be capable of supporting themselves in after life without the training undergone here. But there are other things besides money to be considered, and I do not know any way in which the surplus funds of those who have plenty to spare could be better invested, for themselves and for the public, than by applying them to the training and

education of children who, if left to themselves, must necessarily lead a life of comparative isolation, even in their own homes; who would probably suffer in some cases from over-indulgence, in others from neglect, and whom it is in our power to send back in a few years able to help and comfort themselves, without being a burden upon their parents. I may just hint that in these days all things have a tendency to increase in price very rapidly, and, in consequence, I fancy that institutions like this, as well as a great many others equally useful and valuable, have sometimes great difficulty in making both ends meet. I only drop this as a hint, because I am speaking in Manchester, and I know that in Manchester a hint of this kind is taken up immediately it is made.

XXXIII

THE PURCHASE OF RAILWAYS BY THE STATE

London: June 13, 1873

I came here to listen rather than to lay down any proposition upon my own account. Everybody who has listened to the paper which has been read, and the debate which has ensued, must feel that this is really an enormous question, that we have only been able to touch a very few points connected with it, and that it is a question which will no doubt be very often again before the public. Therefore, every discussion, even though slight and brief, is some addition to our stock of information. I have not the slightest doubt, any more than the author of the paper, that if the public really want the railways purchased by the State it is a thing which can be done. The question of price is not one which would present any insuperable obstacle. No doubt it would be a very serious question ; and probably, as in the case of the telegraphs, we should find the State making a bargain which would be very advantageous to the sellers, and not very advantageous to the purchasers. But still it is a matter that could be settled, and I do not lay very much stress upon that difficulty, nor do I say anything upon the general argument as to whether State management is better or worse than that of individuals and companies.

A very curious change has occurred with regard to that subject in public opinion within the last fifteen years. I recollect well the time of the Crimean War, when anybody would have been hooted down who, at a public meeting, ventured to propose that anything which was at that time in

the hands of private persons or companies should be taken over by the State. There was at that time a tendency greatly to exaggerate the faults of State management, and unduly to magnify the advantages of private management; but now the tide of public opinion has turned, and I think we are rather in danger of running into the opposite extreme. But what I want the meeting to look at are the difficulties which really would have to be faced before any such gigantic change as that which has been proposed could be made. In the first place, is it a wise thing, without the very strongest necessity compelling you to do it, to make the State responsible for 600 or 800 millions more of debt?

Now, if anybody were to say that railways would be superseded, no doubt it would be a bold, if not a paradoxical, assertion; but it is very difficult to fix a limit to the inventive powers of mankind, and I do not think we are to reckon with very perfect certainty on the present form and manner of railway communication being that which will be adopted as altogether final. You may have very great differences of gauge; you may have, possibly, to adapt locomotive power to common roads; you may have various changes and processes which we do not now foresee, which may have the effect of exceedingly diminishing the value of the capital invested in our present railway undertakings. And recollect, if you want an illustration, what would have happened if the State, fifty years ago, yielding to arguments of the kind now brought forward in favour of the purchase of railways, had bought up all the canal property, and had undertaken to carry on the coaching business of the country. It is perfectly clear that upon both those enterprises there would have been an enormous loss incurred—not to mention what I only notice in passing—that the State itself would have been placed in a position in which there would have been the strongest possible inducement to check and prevent any alteration in the existing mode of communication. No doubt, if a change occurs now to any extent superseding our present railway system, that will be to a large class of the community a very serious misfortune,

and it would cause a great destruction of capital and depreciation of property. Still, it would be a misfortune which would fall only on individuals, and the State would not directly participate in it.

Then there is a point which was put forward in the course of this discussion, which has often occurred to my mind, and it is of considerable importance. It is all very well for the State to go into these rather speculative enterprises so long as you can reckon upon a continuous upward movement; but you have to consider this—that if any time, I do not say of national decline, but of national difficulty, were to come—for instance, if railway receipts were to fall off—that would be just the time when other national receipts from taxation would be falling off in the same manner. Therefore, if, on the one hand, the additional responsibility which the State would have taken upon itself would, in time of prosperity, increase its resources, it would, on the other hand, in a corresponding degree tend to diminish its resources just at the moment when the loss would be most seriously felt. But, apart from the question of loss, is it quite a wise thing to have so very large a portion of the public revenue as would be required applied to paying the interest on debt?

We cannot ignore the rate at which national debts have grown up all over Europe and the civilised world, and they are growing still. Every ten years see the collective indebtedness of the great Governments of the world greater than in the previous ten years, and I have often been apprehensive that that tendency may conduce—I will not say here, but in other countries—to very awkward results. Questions may be raised which, in an abstract and speculative way, it is not always very easy to deal with, as to the abstract right of the Legislature to tax posterity; and it is quite possible that all over Europe you may have schemes of partial repudiation discussed, and it will be held out to the people suffering under the pressure of taxation that they may relieve themselves from a good deal of it by reducing the interest on the public debt. I do not say I am seriously afraid of that feeling arising here,

partly because I think we have more sense than our neighbours, and partly because our burdens are comparatively little felt; but if questions of that kind were generally raised throughout Europe, I do not know that it would be an advantage to us in discussing them to have to deal with a debt which would not be as it is now, excluding terminable annuities, little more than 700,000,000*l.*, but would be 1,200,000,000*l.* or 1,400,000,000*l.* Whatever risk there may be, that risk would be infinitely greater if we had to pay the national creditor 50,000,000*l.* of interest instead of having only to pay 25,000,000*l.* of interest.

But passing from that part of the subject, and looking at it as concerns the relations between the State and labour, I do not exactly know whether it has been calculated how many persons would be directly employed by the State, supposing the State to take over the railways; but the number would be undoubtedly several hundreds of thousands, and the general result of it would be this—that the State would be by far the largest employer of labour in the country. Now, as we all know, questions between capital and labour have never been more keenly discussed than within the last few years, and hitherto it has always been the object of the State (and I think the State has succeeded pretty well in accomplishing its object) to keep itself absolutely neutral and impartial as between employer and employed. Is it altogether a prudent thing, at a time when these questions are more likely to be raised than ever before, that the State should abandon that position of neutrality, and become itself a deeply interested party on the side of the employer? You would have the railway servants constituting an exceedingly powerful body, and you would have, probably, demands on their part for higher pay and for shorter hours, and if those demands were resisted there would be great unpopularity and endless talk about the State, whose duty it was to set an example to other capitalists, setting a bad example instead of a good one; and if those demands were complied with—and I think the tendency would be in that direction—then you would find a large hole made in those profits which are so confidently expected.

But that is not, to my mind, the gravest part of the question. The really serious part of it is—how would it be possible for the State, under the system proposed, to avoid exercising an enormous local patronage, which would affect every district and every town throughout the whole country? I am not talking now of the altogether minor question of the appointment of railway servants. Of course, there would be a great deal of small patronage in that way, and, with great respect to some who think otherwise, I do not imagine that with regard to a large portion of that patronage it would be possible to dispose of it by the favourite theory of competitive examination. I do not think you could quite carry that out in employments which require little more than mechanical or manual labour, and if you do not the patronage of the Government, or of the railway board, will not be without its influence; but that is but a very small part of the question of patronage generally.

What I am afraid of is the dependence into which every town may be brought towards the railway board or administrative body with whom the decision of questions rests with regard to the new lines that shall be constructed—what new stations, and what extension of railway communication shall be effected. Every great town in the country in days of commercial prosperity might ask for extended railway accommodation, and it is perfectly clear that the requisitions of all could not be complied with at the same time. It would be necessary that a choice should be made, and I am afraid that that choice might be governed by political preferences; at any rate, whether it were so governed or not, I am quite sure you would not get it out of the heads of the people that that was the case. And recollect that that is a control not only over individuals, but over constituencies as a whole, and it is a control which no extension of the franchise or the mode of taking votes will affect in the slightest degree. You all know what that system of authority has done in Continental countries. We know that in France every public work, every public road, every bridge, and every public building is either constructed by the State or with its assistance at any rate. We all know,

whether truly or falsely, that in the days of Louis Philippe, and from that time to this, it has been continually said that the constituencies which sent Members favourable to the Government got their public works executed, and those who sent Members who sat in opposition got nothing. That was wholesale corruption, and I am afraid you would not find it very easy to keep clear of it here. Of course, you may constitute a railway board not dependent on the Minister of the day; but I think you will find that rather a difficult thing to do. A railway administration controlling a capital of 600 or 700 millions, and having several hundred thousand employés, and making its influence felt in every corner of the country, will be in itself so powerful that, even if detached altogether from the executive, it would be an *imperium in imperio*, and if you connect it with the executive you will not find it easy to separate it from political party.

Then there is the question as to its being the interest of the State under the system proposed to discourage the making of new lines. Of course, if the same return can be obtained without giving increased accommodation—that is to say, without an increased outlay of capital—it will be very much to the advantage of the railway board not to make these new lines. Now, at present, clumsy and imperfect as our system may be, there is to some extent a remedy against that danger. If a company obstinately refuses to provide the accommodation in its district which is required, some fresh company is quite sure to grasp at the chance; and whether that other company carries its Bill or not, at any rate the want of the district makes itself felt; and, probably, a good deal of accommodation is given in that way, from the fear of competition, which would never be given at all if that competition were impossible. Of course, when the whole thing is in the hands of one central management, there is an end of that, and the public in general, expecting to profit by the returns of the railway system, will be directly interested in not giving that accommodation to any particular district unless they

think it is clearly made out beforehand that the line will give a good return. The same argument applies to the machinery and engineering improvements, and there would be a strong tendency to settle down into one type, from which it would be very difficult to induce those who managed the matter to deviate.

The question of canals, steamboats, and docks is also rather a serious one. It never will do to have the railways worked by a central board so long as the canals which have to compete with them are in private hands. If the State buys the railways, it must buy the canals also. Then, in the case of competition with the steamboats, there will be just the same complaint, and you will have pressure put upon you to take these steamboat companies also under Government control. Of course, the same rule would apply also to docks. Whoever has the control of the railway system will have an enormous power in carrying traffic to the docks in one place or in diverting it from docks in another, and you would very soon have it said that if the whole internal communication of the country is in the hands of the State it will not do for the docks to be left in private or local hands. The general conclusion at which I have arrived is that, although the objections which I have endeavoured to put before you may, no doubt, be capable of receiving an answer, still it does not seem to me that up to the present time they have been answered, and, that being so, I am inclined to fall back upon that very hackneyed sentiment—

> Rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of.

I will not detain you longer. If the process of amalgamation is to continue, and if the whole railway system of the country is to get into the hands of six or seven great companies, that will to a certain extent alter the question, in so far that it will probably be necessary to have a greater amount of control and supervision by the State than has hitherto been thought

necessary or desirable, because, in that case, all semblance of competition will have disappeared. I do not at all attempt to predict what may come of that. I only say that at present I do not think such a case has been made out against our present system, and in favour of that which it is proposed to substitute, as would justify us in embarking on so enormous an undertaking as the doubling of our National Debt, and placing the whole railway system in the hands of the State.

XXXIV

THE ECONOMICAL CONDITION OF ENGLAND

LIVERPOOL: OCTOBER 16, 1873

I ACCEPT with a warmer feeling of gratitude than I can easily express the high honour which you have paid me. It has been poorly earned, but if I cannot receive it as an ackowledgment of anything done by me in the past, I take it as an encouragement for the future. I know that I am addressing an audience composed of members of every political party, and you will believe me when I say that it is utterly out of my thoughts to twist to any party purpose the courtesy which allows me now to address you. I see before me the leading representative men of this the greatest seaport in the world; I see Lancashire friends, old and new, from all parts of the county; I am asked to meet the representatives of the greatest industrial communities of this country. In such an assembly I cannot touch on what are popularly called politics; yet, if I am to speak to you at all, I must speak on public affairs of some sort, and any man who undertakes to do that under such conditions has to step with caution along a narrow and slippery path, with the stormy ocean of controversy beneath him on the one side, and on the other the dull and muddy and stagnant pool of utter commonplace.

Well, gentlemen, I think, in the first place, I may safely congratulate you on the steady and continued prosperity of Liverpool. I dare say many of you have felt as I have, while watching the trade returns of the last few years, that there was something almost alarming—because so unlike the ordinary course of human affairs—in the vast increase of

material prosperity which from 1870 to the present time has gone on without a check. Probably the check is coming now rather than later; sooner or later it must come; but foreseen as it has been, and predicted indeed long before it appeared, I think we need not fear that it will be either sudden or severe, nor need we doubt that ample employment will, in a few years, be found for those additional miles of dock space which your Dock Board, under the direction of their able and experienced engineer, are going to add to works on this river, already without a rival on either side of the Atlantic. One of the problems which just now is most exercising the minds of thinking men is the question whether, considering the enormous increase of wages in almost every kind of labour, and the consequences which that increase involves, we shall be able to keep up permanently the industrial superiority in the markets of the world which we have hitherto asserted, and which was supposed mainly to rest on cheap coal, cheap iron, and cheap labour. And undoubtedly that is a problem which everybody can state, and which nobody can solve. I do not find fault with those who are alarmists on this matter. They are crying out before they are hurt, but after all that is the more sensible alternative, for crying out after you are hurt does nobody any good. But I am sceptical for my own part as to the reality or the imminence of the dangers which are apprehended for the future.

Put it at the worst, who is going to undersell us? Are the Americans? Why, their economical conditions are the same as ours, with this important difference, that with them the labouring man has all the soil of a vast continent to settle upon, and by that inducement is constantly being drawn off from manufacturing employment. Is it the Continental competition that we have to fear? The same causes which affect labour here affect it there also; and if you look to the other elements of the comparison, the superiority of England in point of capital and of natural resources remains untouched. I do not think, if I may judge by much of what I hear and read, that economists have that firm faith which one might

expect in the laws which they themselves lay down. I speak ignorantly, but to me it seems as if the working of those laws is not very complicated, and undoubtedly they will operate pretty equally whether we believe in them or not. If in any business, be it what it may, the demands of the workman are raised beyond what the market will bear, orders fall off, business grows slack, and by a natural adjustment, the demand for labour being less, the wages of labour in that business drop again as certainly as they rose. I know it may be answered, 'No, that won't happen, because, rather than submit to fall back upon old rates, the man will emigrate or take to some other employment.' I have my doubts as to either of those results occurring. The mass of men do not easily turn to new work, especially if it requires skill and practice, and they are not easily wrenched away from home and country. If they are to go in any number, I do not of course deny that great temporary inconvenience and embarrassment may follow; yet, even in that case, there are limiting causes which will operate.

It is very questionable whether, in the long run, emigration has ever materially and permanently lessened population. Ireland will occur to you as an exception; but I think, if occasion served, I could show you that the case of Ireland was, in many instances, peculiar and abnormal. Greater prosperity in the working class means early marriages; early marriages in this country generally imply extensive families; children are better fed and better cared for, more of them grow up, and so the gap fills again. To put it in one word, I am not much disposed to believe in wages being permanently raised by any artificial combination beyond their natural level. If a demand for increased pay is successful, that is, at least, *primâ facie* evidence that those who made it were justified in making it, for every man has a right to sell his labour as dear as he can. If it is unsuccessful, there may be annoyance and ill-feeling caused at the moment; but there is no permanent mischief done. Up to this time again every scarcity of hands has led to cheaper production by

improved mechanical agencies, and who knows but that even the coal famine may be a blessing in disguise if it teaches us to burn our smoke instead of being compelled to swallow it, and generally to economise our supply of heat and power? I am almost afraid to repeat the calculations which I have heard from competent men as to the saving which might be made in the production of steam power. Many will tell you, and I believe it is not an extreme estimate, that, taking the country through, the same result as now might be got by the burning of one-half or even of two-fifths of what is actually consumed. Is not that a subject worth going into more thoroughly than we have gone into it hitherto? I ask only; I do not venture in such a matter to express an opinion of my own. Again, if we think ourselves compelled to look forward to a future less prosperous than the present, cannot we at least utilise our fears, if we must be frightened, and determine to do more than we have done yet, while we possess the means to lessen the load of debt which will press on our successors?

We hardly realise the weight of the burden which our grandfathers and great-grandfathers bore. No doubt they grumbled over it, but they bore it; and with everything taxed that was taxable, and with 10 per cent. income tax into the bargain, they had something to grumble about. We may or may not be better than they were, but assuredly we are better off, and therefore it is that I venture to put in a word on behalf of posterity.

XXXV

THE ARMY AND THE VOLUNTEERS

LIVERPOOL: DECEMBER 17, 1873

. . . . HAVING said so much on our merely local concerns, you will allow me to add one or two remarks of a more general character. I look on the maintenance of a strong and effective Volunteer force as more than ever important at the present day, and I do so for this reason—we live in an age when armies have assumed more gigantic proportions than in any period known to us in history, and, coincident with that state of things, our industrial prosperity, the demand for labour in every branch of industry which is the result of that prosperity, the tendency of men to try to better their condition by emigration, and the desire, stimulated by education, for a higher standard of comfort in living, are tending to increase the cost to the State of every individual soldier. Germany can bring into the field, as is supposed, considerably above 1,000,000 of men. France, under the new laws of universal service, intends to have 1,200,000 available, though probably as yet not above a third of that number has been reached; and I believe, though in that matter I speak with greater uncertainty, that the Russian numbers could in time of war be brought to exceed either of these figures.

Never since the world began have such masses of men been drilled and disciplined for purposes of war. Extremes meet. What we call progress is sometimes only oscillation, and the latest development of modern and popular ideas on the Continent, the converting of every able-bodied man into a soldier, whether he will or no, is merely a recurrence, after

many generations, to the general practice—I will not say of barbarous, but of primitive and imperfectly civilised communities, whose fighting strength is simply the entire male population. We have reversed the boast which was common in the writings of the last century and a half, when it was said that in modern times the calamities of war fell on comparatively few persons, because modern wars were carried on by a special and limited class, and not by the community as a whole. I think that what is passing now is a reaction injurious and almost disastrous to civilisation; but there it is, and we must accept the fact. No doubt we, with our insular position and our fleet, are not required to compete with Continental Powers in the magnitude of our military preparations, but we cannot be entirely unaffected by them, especially as we have not only England, but the British Empire, to guard; there are penalties to be paid for the glory and for the substantial advantages of a widely extended dominion, and the ubiquity of our commercial and colonial relations, which adds so much to the wealth and strength of the country, involves the perpetual risk of unintended collisions with savage or half-savage races.

All these things point to the absolute necessity of supplementing our admirable, but small, regular army by a large development of auxiliary forces. That is an idea which has been gaining strength for years past, and which is not likely to be allowed to drop. Now, we must not overrate the military efficiency of such forces. If there is any use or value in training, we must expect to find that occasional training does not produce results equal to those which we look for in the case of regulars, whose whole life for years is one continued preparation for active service. Yet there is something to be set on the other side. The Volunteers in general may fairly claim to have in their ranks a higher average of general culture and capacity than is found in the Line; and probably, if called on for actual service, a Volunteer regiment, at least in these parts, could produce more skilled workmen, and men who would know better how to shift for themselves

in various ways, than a body of purely professional soldiers, and I am inclined to think that that difference will continue. It is, or it was, a favourite idea of many people who speculate on military matters that the regular army might come to be something like a great training school for the young men who enlist in it, where they should go and learn their duty for some three or four years, and then, having got all the benefit that is to be got out of drill and discipline, fall back into the ordinary routine of civilian life. I have always been sceptical as to that expectation getting itself realised on a large scale. There is in England so much competition; there is—and I for one am glad of it—so keen a desire to get on industrially and socially—there is, moreover, among English people so general a wish to get settled early in some permanent employment which they may follow for the rest of their lives, that I suspect you will not find many, or at least not many of the best sort of young men, who will take up a military career in the Line as a way of passing a few years, with the prospect of leaving it at five or six and twenty and starting afresh at that age to learn a new trade.

I am not going to argue the vexed question of long or short enlistments. It may be quite right—I think it is quite right—that soldiers, who on a trial dislike their occupation, should be able to leave it after a moderate term of service; but I earnestly hope that, whatever is done in that respect, encouragement will be given to those who wish to remain in the army for the whole or the greater part of their years of military efficiency. I say that because I am sure that in England the most effective means of getting good service at a moderate cost is to hold out the prospect of a permanent provision, even though it should be one of very limited amount. We see how that principle operates in the Civil Service of the State. There is a constant scramble to get into it, though the pay is wretched for the most part, and the promotion slow; because a young man knows, or at least supposes, that once in it he will not be turned adrift on the world except by his own fault. That is a subject which cannot be too seriously considered,

and as everything connected with the army is just now in an experimental and provisional condition, I do not doubt we shall hear a good deal more of it in the next few years.

There is one thing which I heard the other day, which seems to me to be eminently satisfactory. When this miserable Ashantee War broke out, although the service to be performed combined every possible element of unpopularity; although it held and holds out little except the prospect of a series of petty skirmishes against a savage enemy in the most detestable climate that exists; and although there is, as we all know, unhappily a strong and general feeling among officers that they have grievances to complain of, the existence of which has, indeed, been recognised by the appointment of a Commission to inquire into them—notwithstanding all these things, when it was known for certain that an expedition would be sent out to the Gold Coast, I am told that the number of officers who volunteered for that expedition was far in excess of any possible requirements. And amongst those who so offered themselves there have been many who had every private or social inducement to stay at home, and who could be impelled by no motive except the desire to be of use, and the honourable ambition of professional distinction. As long as that spirit lasts, defects of organisation may indeed give us trouble and inconvenience, but we need not doubt that things will come right in the end. And it is not one of the least of the advantages of a Volunteer army that it keeps alive that sense of public duty too rarely awakened amongst civilians in a peaceful and highly organised community like ours; that it helps to remind us all that we owe something to the State beyond mere payment of taxes and obedience to the laws; that it appeals to us—not as to Conservatives or Liberals—not as to Protestants or Catholics—not as to rich men or poor men—but to all of us as Englishmen, with a long historical past behind us, and with a future which we may largely help to shape, and which we are bound so far as in us lies to render not unworthy of that past.

XXXVI

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE

LIVERPOOL COLLEGE: DECEMBER 20, 1873

IF I aspired to or sought for the reputation of a public speaker beyond what the necessities of national and local business require, I should assuredly not have presented myself before you to-day, for I cannot forget, and you cannot fail to remember, that twelve months ago this place was occupied by one who, whatever judgment may be passed on any part of his long and illustrious political career, occupies beyond dispute one of the foremost places in the list of our English Parliamentary orators. Mr. Gladstone's address will be fresh in the memory of many of you. I shall not follow in his track, nor aim at doing what he has done; but my name having been connected with this college, of which, thirty-five years ago, my father was one of the original founders, and holding, as I am proud to do, the honorary office of your President, I could not refuse the invitation of your Council that I should take the chair on this annual occasion.

And now that you are before me I must say a few words to you—words in which there will be nothing very new, nothing that has not occurred probably to most of you before, but words of counsel which is at least disinterested, and of good-will which is at any rate sincere. First, let me congratulate the winners of the prizes. They will not often again enjoy a success, unless their lives are very different from those of most men, as to which they can feel so sure that it has been fairly earned, and which will come to them

accompanied by so few drawbacks. The victories of mature life, in whatever sphere of action, are for the most part gained with effort, disputed while their novelty remains, and admitted only when with their novelty whatever enjoyment they could bring has passed off. It is not so with those whose success we recognise to-day. They may well feel glad, and perhaps a little proud of what they have done. But let them recollect as a caution, and let the losers also recollect by way of encouragement, that an early success, though it gives a lad a good start, gives him little else; that the race of life is a race which tests endurance more than speed; that some of the most hopeless failures in later years have been of the dashing, brilliant, clever young fellows who seemed at school and college to carry everything before them; and that the slow, plodding lad, who seems to have nothing in his favour except a dogged determination to go on, often comes out higher than either he himself or any of his friends expected.

There occur to me the cases of two men, one within my own personal recollection, the other belonging to a preceding generation, who rose in due course to fill some of the highest offices in the State, and filled them not unworthily, who were at college, as I have been informed, almost the habitual objects of good-natured ridicule among their acquaintance for what was considered to be their exceptional slowness of comprehension. On the other hand, I really should not like to inquire—for, though an interesting piece of social statistics, it would be a very painful one—how many high wranglers at Cambridge, and first-class men at Oxford, how many winners in their day of prizes and scholarships have seen their boats go down when they have pushed out into the rough open sea of the world, and are now painfully struggling for bare subsistence, perhaps at some wretched literary hackwork, or possibly keeping sheep in Australia, and doing odd jobs for an employer who very likely can neither read nor write. Now, the moral I wish to draw is this: Do not any of you be disheartened because you think yourselves slow or stupid, even though you may really at present appear to have good

ground for the belief; and do not, on the other hand, any of you be confident of the future merely because you know or believe yourselves to have what is called cleverness. If I was to tell you that in my belief that particular quality of intellectual quickness and sharpness is by no means the first qualification for a successful career, many people would consider in these days of competitive examinations that I was wilfully indulging in a paradox; but I believe it is the truth.

Talent is the edge of the knife that makes it penetrate easily, but whether it penetrates deeply or not depends quite as much on the force applied to it as on the sharpness of the blade. What a man really takes a keen interest in he is seldom too dull to understand and to do well; and, conversely, when a man does not care to put the best of his brains into a thing, no amount of mere cleverness will enable him to do it well if it is a thing of any real difficulty, or unless it is one which he has trained himself to do easily by much previous practice, in which latter case he is really reaping, in present ease, the fruit of past exertion—living, so to speak, upon the capital which he has accumulated by early industry. It has been said that 'genius consisted in an enormous capacity for taking trouble,' and though this definition may not be quite wide enough, it is not, to my mind, very far from the mark. The most conspicuous instance of complete efficiency and success in active life recently witnessed is that which was obtained three years ago by the military organisation of Germany; and I am told, by those who ought to be the best judges, that both among Germans themselves and many other foreign critics, that efficiency and success are ascribed not so much to any extraordinary display of genius or originality of design on the part of some few individuals, as to the general habit of minute and almost microscopic attention to every detail of duty, however apparently small, which has become a tradition in that service.

I believe that everywhere the same result will follow from the same cause; but to acquire and to keep up in everyday

work that habit of concentrated attention on details, two things are necessary—training and energy. The training you can all give yourselves; the energy which is necessary to maintain it is, in part, no doubt a gift of Nature. Men possess it, to begin with, in very different degrees, but it may be lost where it naturally exists, and enormously increased where originally it was but feeble. And in that connection it is important to notice how much depends on what students and young men are apt to despise as below their notice—I mean a perfectly sound physical condition. Take two men, if they could be found, exactly alike in mental and bodily aptitudes, and let the one go on carelessly and idly indulging his appetites, and generally leading a life of what is called pleasure, and let the other train himself by early hours, by temperate habits, and by giving to muscles and brain each their fair share of employment, and at the end of two or three years they will be as widely apart in their capacity for exertion as if they had been born with wholly different constitutions.

Without a normal healthy condition there can, as a rule, be no good work, and though that qualification cannot absolutely be secured or preserved by any rules, a little common sense and care will go a long way both in securing and preserving it. On that point I will just give these hints: First, that it is not mental labour that hurts anybody unless the excess be very great, but rather fretting and fidgeting over the prospect of labour to be gone through, so that the man who can accustom himself to take things calmly, which is quite as much a matter of discipline as of nature, and who, by keeping well beforehand with what he has to do, avoids undue hurry and nervous excitement, has a great advantage over one who follows a different practice. Next, I would warn you that those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness. Third, that where an opportunity of choice is given, morning work is generally better than night work; and lastly, a matter which I should not stoop to allude to but that I know

the dangers of an overdriven existence in a crowded town, that if a man cannot get through his day's labour, of whatever kind it may be, without artificial support, it should be a serious consideration for him whether that kind of labour is fit for him at all.

But supposing that you have developed in yourselves as much energy as you are fairly capable of—and observe that, while I deprecate carelessness in this matter, I advise no man to go into the opposite extreme of watching his own mental state with an attention which is apt to grow morbid—the next question is, How are you to employ it? Is it to be concentrated to the utmost on your business, whatever that may be, or diffused among various pursuits, some useful in a material or professional point of view, some valuable only as methods of intellectual cultivation? That is a question which everybody must learn to answer for himself. Experience will teach him what suits his own temperament, and nothing else can. It may be that the former course leads more surely to what is called practical success, though I think all the hardest workers I have known in their business were men who had a very keen enjoyment of at least some one pursuit outside of their business; but I am certain that the latter course gives a larger return of general well-being. A great lawyer, or engineer, or architect, or medical man, or manufacturer, or merchant, is generally in some danger of getting to care for nothing beyond his profession. To my mind that is a mistake, and it is a mistake that brings its own punishment.

Mr. Mill mentions incidentally certain persons who, knowing nothing except political economy, necessarily, as he says, knew that but ill; and I believe the generalisation is a true one. But, apart from that, success is very well; but, when you have succeeded, what then? It is a poor choice, either to have to go on working without necessity or advantage, merely because you have no other taste or pleasure left in life, or else to make the hazardous experiment of passing from an existence intensely occupied to one of utter vacuity. Here it is that literary culture will be really of use. Put it at the

lowest, a man who has the habit of reading, to whom his books are the best company, finds in them a distraction from anxiety, a comfort in petty troubles, a protection against weariness and ennui, a society which he can take up when he will and leave without giving offence, and, above all, an escape from the vulgar interests and mean details of private life into the healthier air of thought and ideas which concern mankind in general. Isolation and indifference are impossible to us. We could not, if we were foolish enough to wish it, remain absolutely and exclusively absorbed in our own affairs; but we have the choice in our own power whether we will participate, even if only as lookers-on, in the great intellectual movements which influence our race, or whether our interest in that which is external to ourselves should be confined to the petty gossip of the parish or the town where we live.

More than that, every age and every profession has its characteristic merits and defects, and what we read may be and ought to be a kind of preventive of the one-sidedness which grows upon us from what we have to do. You live, let me suppose, in a town surrounded with the works of man only; all the more reason why you should keep up some study or pursuit that gives you an insight into the marvellous laws of animate or inanimate Nature. You follow, say, a profession or business where your minds are necessarily, for the most part, conversant with the means by which money may be made, legitimately and honourably made, of course, but still where the great prize set before you is pecuniary gain. I think a man so circumstanced, unless he is one of a thousand, will be a little apt to look at most things in their material aspect, which is not always their most real aspect: that those three familiar letters 'L. S. D.' will get rather too deeply impressed on his brain; that he will be inclined to let his thoughts run too much on interests and too little on ideas; and for that very natural and excusable bias he may find a corrective either in the speculations of great thinkers, in the historical documents which bring home to him how microscopically small are his own concerns in comparison to those

of the world in general, or better still, as I should say, in the records left by those eminent men, of whatever country and age—for happily they have existed in most countries and most ages—by whom wealth and comfort, and life itself, were accounted as nothing where public duty or private honour, or even the last infirmity of noble minds, the desire of being remembered after death, drew them in an opposite direction.

I speak, as in this place I hold myself justified in doing, mainly to those who are going out into the world to earn their own living by more or less intellectual employment. If there be any here on whom that necessity does not press, who will be the master of their own time and pursuits, to such I say they enjoy an exceptional privilege, but one which brings with it also exceptional temptations. Self is a hard master. Pleasure comes most surely to those who do not make it an object, who have an object beyond and independent of it, and who are content to take the rough with the smooth. Those who, being so circumstanced, do not make work for themselves, feel the want of it, and those who do feel the want of external pressure to keep them to it. Leisure unbounded ought to bring to those who have it power to do more and to think more than others; but I am afraid that as a rule they are generally apt both to do less and to think less. I do not talk to you on the duties which, apart from professional occupation, you owe to the community of which you are members. In these days of active and awakened thought the responsibilities of citizenship are brought home to us all. You will interest yourselves, and as educated men you ought to interest yourselves, in public affairs.

All I ask of you to bear in mind is what young men do not always think of, that if indifference in such matters is a fault —which I should be the last person to deny—it is equally a dereliction of duty to jump to conclusions upon them without the same degree of care and thoughtfulness which you would feel bound to exercise in regard to your private concerns. Think, read, discuss, speculate as much as you please, but recollect that strong convictions may go together with very

limited knowledge; that to have got hold of a truth in connection with any subject is a very different thing from having got possession of the whole truth; that scarcely any man sees things at forty as he saw them at twenty; and that it is not only your interest as a matter of self-culture, but your duty towards the community of which you are members, to keep your minds open to reasoning and your judgment free on the great subjects of public concern, until you are satisfied, not indeed that you have attained to the knowledge of what is absolutely true and right—for any man must be presumptuous who feels sure that he can do that—but that you have come to the decision which deliberately appears to you the soundest, and which is most in harmony with your permanent and habitual convictions.

There are graver subjects which I will barely touch. You live in an age of inquiry, of doubt, of mental restlessness, when more than ever men are unwilling to accept traditional solutions of the great mysteries which surround our life, and when many brains are bewildered, and many hearts are made to ache by the vain effort to solve problems impenetrable to human reason. You cannot escape the common destiny. Those of you who reflect—and I hope they will be many—will inevitably have times of mental perplexity, when the very purpose of existence seems obscure and doubtful, when traditions appear to fail and reason is baffled, and when men ask in bewilderment, 'What does it all mean?' I am not here to deal with these high matters; it is not my duty, nor is this the place. Only so much I tell you, I believe that there are ideas implanted in us which, in a sound mind, no merely intellectual disturbance will long affect, and of which, in the deepest darkness, we may always, if we will, keep hold. Right and wrong, honour, duty, and country, benevolence towards men, and responsibility towards the unseen Power by which human actions are guided and controlled —these are not idle phrases. In all countries and ages they have retained their meaning. They are realities which corre-

spond with the deepest wants and feelings of our nature, and no man will feel himself utterly cast down who can say in his heart what the wisest and best of the human race have proclaimed in the whole tenor of their lives: Whether I am happy or unhappy is not my chief affair; what most and first concerns me is to find my work in life, to recognise it and do it.

XXXVII

THE PROMOTION OF SCIENTIFIC INDUSTRY—THE INDUSTRIAL POSITION OF ENGLAND—APPLICATION OF SCIENCE TO MANUFACTURES

MANCHESTER: JANUARY 16, 1874

WE have come together, as you know, for the purpose of formally opening the meetings of a new Association, the object of which is the promotion of scientific industry; and you will expect from me a few words as to the object for which it exists, as to the means by which it intends to operate, and as to its prospects and possibilities of success.

Before I endeavour to explain to you what this Society is, let me say, briefly, what it is not. It has nothing in it of a political character; for that the names of the promoters are a sufficient guarantee. They represent, I believe, every section of political opinion; and I do not think that we are ever likely to deviate into the discussion of topics that can even seem to have a political bearing. Nor do we intend to deal with that class of questions which seem to be occupying the largest share of attention at the present moment. Labour and capital will never be in want of a battle-field on which to fight out their traditional quarrel; they have all the world outside in which to carry on their war; but we do not mean, if we can help it, that it shall be carried on in these rooms.

Our object is a purely national one, to do our part towards increasing and further developing the industrial resources of this country. That is an intention with which no one can reasonably quarrel. Increase of national wealth means greater comfort for the poor, better means of education, diminished pauperism, a lengthened average of human life, and, notwith-

standing some temporary appearances to the contrary, I firmly believe that in the long run it implies habits of increased temperance and sobriety. It means, above all, a greater command of leisure. Hard and continued labour for subsistence is a necessary training in the early stages of society, when natural indolence is too strong to be overcome by desire for superfluities; but when men become sufficiently cultivated to desire and to value leisure for rational purposes, the obtaining of it is one of the most reasonable objects towards which labour and labour-saving agencies can be directed.

But I need not stop to argue a point as to which there is not likely here to be any difference of opinion. We have had experience enough to show us that a nation may be very wealthy and very patriotic, and, on the other hand, that collective poverty does not exclude individual demoralisation. I only wish to put in a word of caution, lest we should be supposed to be aiming at a result not important or not desirable in itself. England is called a rich country, and so it is as far as command of capital is concerned; but if we take the average of individual incomes through the whole community, following the best statistics that can be had on the subject, and not forgetting that a large element of conjecture enters into all of them, we shall be surprised to find how low the average ranges: 30*l.* a year for each individual, or 150*l.* for every family, is the highest estimate that I have ever heard, and probably that is a good deal above the truth. Man for man, I think it may be doubtful whether we are not nearly equalled by the French in that respect; they have advantages over us both in point of area and of climate, and I well remember hearing one of the most experienced and wealthiest of European capitalists contend, not many years ago, that France was, on the whole, the wealthiest country in Europe. Late events have gone far to show that at least he had some grounds for his belief; and I am afraid that we can hardly doubt that the United States equal or exceed us, as they certainly ought, considering their boundless possibilities both in the way of agricultural and of mineral produce.

There is one point which it is always necessary for us

Englishmen to bear in mind when considering this class of questions, that, to a great extent, our prosperity depends on causes which may or may not continue to operate. It is like the profits of a profession or a business, not the rental of an estate. In all civilised ages the liability of commercial and industrial supremacy to pass from one country to another has grown into a commonplace. You do not want to be reminded of the story of Venice, or of Florence, or of Holland, not to go back to remoter instances ; and though nothing indicates that our industrial supremacy is seriously threatened as yet, and though for generations perhaps it may go on increasing rather than diminishing, still we have no right to expect that the laws which have hitherto seemed to regulate the course of human society will be suspended in our favour.

If we look to the sources of our great industrial position, we shall find that some of them are of an essentially temporary character. England gave greater security to person and property than any other European country, in times when both kinds of security were very much rarer than they are now. England had extensive settlements in various parts of the earth at a time when settlements traded only with the mother country, and she had the command of the sea for many years, when it was closed by war against Continental Powers. She thus got a start in foreign and colonial trade which she has not lost. Add to that, that in the use of steam-power, of machinery on a large scale, and more lately of railroads, we have had precedence in point of time over all rivals ; and you will see that, both as regards manufactures and trade, we have been favoured during the last hundred and fifty years by a combination of circumstances such as we cannot reasonably expect to recur.

No foreign State is likely again to drive out its citizens either by excessive oppression in civil matters, or by religious persecution ; and if it did, any emigration so caused would more probably be directed to the New World than to England. No Continental Government is likely to be so desperately bad as to check in any great measure the natural tendency of

civilised man to accumulate wealth. Foreign and colonial trade are open to all the world—we have no monopoly of mechanical appliances; and machinery, I believe, can now be produced nearly as cheaply and as well in Belgium as in England. In regard to all the matters of which I have spoken, the tendency is towards a level. We have not gone back, but others have advanced. I suppose it is in these parts a matter of pretty common experience that a man who succeeds to a business ready-made does not get up as early, or work as hard, as his father who had to make it. That will be our case if we do not take care. If we mean to keep our old position as the industrial leaders of the world, we must throw away no chance, and leave no stone unturned. No doubt, in applied science, whatever discoveries are made, or inventions brought into use by one country, will soon extend to all. Still there is an obvious advantage in getting the lead; and that advantage we ought, if possible, to secure.

Now, what is our present industrial situation? What are the immediate, or impending, difficulties which we have to face? In the first place, the effect of our past and present success is that a demand for labour has been created, greater than the country can easily supply. But scarcity of labour is increased by what may prove to be the growing tendency to emigrate among the working class, consequent on their increased knowledge of the world outside, and of the greater ease with which they can pass from one country to another. And it can only be checked by the very result which we most apprehend, viz., that when the demands of the workers have been pressed, in any branch of industry, beyond what the state of the market will justify, production here is stopped, and the orders are sent to foreign countries.

Again, it is easier now than ever before for capitalists to send their money abroad, and, of course, if they can see their way to do that with safety and profit, they will. We have to consider the probability of a competition in which labour only will be supplied by the foreigner, the capital, and probably the directing skill also, being English. That is a comparatively

new state of things; but there are already thousands of Englishmen directing natives of other countries in industrial pursuits, and the process is not likely to stop. In old days a summary remedy would have been applied, but nobody now talks of keeping out foreign manufactures by a protective duty. That is an American and an Australian idea, but it is not likely to be ours. We are therefore in this position. If we cannot produce cheaply, we shall be undersold, even in our own markets; we have to compete with countries where wages are very far lower than here (who can say, looking forward, how those *officinæ gentium*—India, China, and Russia—may affect the labour supply of the future?), and we cannot expect that here wages will fall much, if at all, below their present rate. We are forced, therefore, to one of two conclusions—either we must acknowledge ourselves beaten; or we must contrive to make every day's labour of a man more productive than it has been hitherto, by the more general or by the more skilful use of mechanical and chemical science. It is not power that is wanting. You have it, not in the steam-engine alone, but in every wind that blows, in every river that runs, in every rise and fall of the tide on our shores; and it may be in a hundred other forms not yet looked at or even thought of. You search underground for the material which is to produce heat, and it is heat itself that stops you at a certain depth. The question is not where to find your power, but how to apply it; the resources that Nature offers us are illimitable; what is limited is our skill in turning them to account.

If there is one lesson which history teaches us more clearly than another it is this—that national wealth depends, in the long run, comparatively little on natural advantages, and almost entirely on the qualities of the people who have to use them. If industrial superiority were a question of soil or climate, the foremost countries of the world ought to be Naples and Turkey, Mexico and Central America, Brazil, or the East and West India Islands. If on extent and population, China and India ought to be at the head of civilisation. We know how far both these hypotheses are from the reality.

We know that, as a fact, the great accumulations of human wealth which history records have mainly taken place in nations not favoured by Nature, but rather the reverse. Tyre was a barren rock. Venice grew up on a sandbank. Holland, perhaps the most remarkable instance of human industry triumphing over difficulties, was described long ago as a country that drew 20 feet of water. The most improved agriculture that the world has yet seen is in the cold and bleak lowlands of Scotland; and in North America it is from the poor soil and trying climate of New England that that portion of the American race has proceeded that is most effectually developing the resources of that continent.

The old saying among agriculturists, that the worst soil makes the best farmer, is true, both directly and conversely. Where any race of men has been so situated that in order to live they must struggle against exceptional difficulties; and when, on the other hand, those difficulties have not been so great as utterly to crush out the energies of those who had to contend against them, the result has been so to stimulate industry that not only these men live while others would starve, but they grow rich where their neighbours, leading easier lives under more favourable conditions, remain poor. In countries where the bread-fruit tree, the plantain, or the cocoa-palm grow, so that the inhabitants can live without doing a month's work in a year, you will seldom find anybody, except perhaps an immigrant, who has anything laid by, or who will take the trouble to provide himself with more than the bare necessaries of existence. In a minor degree, the same result following from the same cause was seen in the case of the Irish peasant before the potato disease and the consequent famine. But, further, it is not unassisted industry that will go far to create national wealth, though industry is the first and most indispensable element of production. Look at the Chinaman, who will work seven days in the week if you let him, for pay which a European labourer could not live on. Look at a much higher type of being, the French agricultural peasant, laborious, frugal, temperate, as he generally is, working his

very life out for a bare subsistence on the little patch of ground which he cultivates, with nothing except his own labour and that of his family. Morally, he is an admirable example; from an industrial point of view, he is rather a melancholy spectacle; because, looking at these things as we do here, there can be no greater waste of power than that which is involved in a man doing with his own hands what he can command natural forces to do for him. Our own industrial history presents an exactly opposite sight. By joint action instead of isolated action, by economising labour instead of squandering it, by following the rule of doing nothing for ourselves that we can get Nature to do for us (imperfectly as we have followed it so far), we have accumulated in this island, with our population of not more than 22,000,000, including women, children, and helpless persons of all sorts, power which is variously estimated, but which probably represents the labour of at least 500,000,000 of able-bodied men. There is no reason why we should stop there; and, in fact, we are not stopping.

Notwithstanding an unusual scarcity of farming labour, the harvest of last year was got in without any unusual difficulty, the deficiency of hands having been made up by the increased use of machinery. That process will continue, and (let me say in passing) it seems very probable that the movement which is now going on to create an artificial labour famine in the rural districts by means of assisted emigration may lead to a result very different from what its promoters anticipate—grazing farms and machinery tending to make human labour redundant more rapidly than emigration will absorb it. However that may be, we see that every new mill, every iron work, every locomotive of the present day, shows improvements on those which were made twenty years ago. If capital increases more rapidly than population, as it certainly has done of late years, and is probably doing now, so that the existing rate of wages is maintained, or even increased, that process must in the nature of things continue. But if the modern system of doing everything by mechanism spares

human muscles, it makes a larger demand than before on human brains. Taking charge of a locomotive is a more complicated business than driving a cart, and an Armstrong gun requires a good deal more looking after than an old 24-pounder of Nelson's time. Therefore, as the labourer develops into the skilled artisan, you require technical training instead of the simple old rule of thumb.

Now, it is the belief of the promoters of this new Society that a great deal may be done for technical training without interfering with that training of the workshop which is, in one sense, the best of all. They believe, moreover, that there are innumerable investigations of an experimental kind, having for their object the perfecting of industrial processes, which being everybody's business are nobody's business, which would in their results enormously benefit the trade or industry which they concern, but which individuals are slow to undertake, because they do not bring any certain return of profit to the person who spends time and labour upon them. If, for instance, we could hit upon a perfectly satisfactory plan for disposing of sewage—which certainly we have not as yet—the gain to the nation would be counted by millions yearly, but the inventor very probably might be a poorer man than when he began. What do you suppose is the value of the coal smoke that goes into the air in Lancashire alone? What is the value, the potential value, of those acids which you allow to pass out of your chimneys at St. Helens and elsewhere, and which are going a long way to make some districts in this county uninhabitable? Is it, or is it not, true that some manufacturers and some shipowners are getting fully three times as much work out of every ton of coal as others? And, if so, what is the amount of waste represented by the still continuing employment of imperfect and antiquated machinery? How much, again, remains to do in the way of utilising waste substances? What unworked mines lie before us in that direction?

Take one instance in the paper manufacture. Twenty years ago esparto grass was known only to botanists. Now

we import, I believe, 130,000 tons of it yearly, and that does not prevent a variety of other new substances being used, or experimented upon, for the same purpose—wood fibre, bamboo, and Australian weeds. Take another which is familiar to all the world. A few years ago the refuse of gas-works was merely a nuisance, difficult and troublesome to get rid of. Now, the London gas-works alone receive for their residual products half a million yearly, those products being converted into mineral dyes. It is only yesterday, again, that we learnt to utilise Australian cattle as food in England, and we are very far from having perfected that process. Take another illustration. How many millions of tons of refuse coal and coal-dust have been destroyed merely to get rid of them? And we now know that, by a process neither complicated nor costly, they can be worked up into a very useful fuel. So with peat. I cannot tell you accurately how much of the surface of Ireland is peat bog. I believe it is more than a tenth of the whole. There it lies, fuel within easy reach, on the very surface of the earth, yet no one hitherto has made the conversion of it into heat or power a successful operation. That is still an unsolved problem, but will anybody contend that it is an insoluble one? Instances might be multiplied without end; many of you here present could suggest a dozen for every one I have touched upon; but you hardly require proof of my proposition, which is only this —that we are barely beginning to understand, or to deal with, the industrial resources which Nature everywhere puts into our hands.

We do not wish to exaggerate our power or our prospects, but we believe that, by bringing together representatives of every industry that is followed in this district, and by providing all with the means of comparing notes, and discussing matters which concern them, a great many ideas will be started, which would otherwise not come before the public at all; a great many plans which are more or less before the public will be tested and scrutinised; those that bear the test will obtain a more early and more extended publicity than

they otherwise would have, and (which is also a gain), those that do not will be more speedily shunted out of the way. A man who, on some technical subject, has got a notion which he thinks valuable will know where to bring it; discussion will show its weak points, mould it probably into a better form, and, at the same time, spread it more widely.

Our objects, as stated in the prospectus, are tolerably wide and comprehensive. We propose to encourage and assist 'investigations and experimental researches in science and the arts, having a practical bearing on industry.' We propose to offer premiums and rewards for industrial improvements, whether in machinery, in processes, or in the use of new raw materials. We propose to hold periodical meetings, where papers on subjects of this kind may be read, and to circulate them in print, as is done by other scientific societies. We think that an industrial library and museum, in connection with one another, and with the general work of the Society, will supply a want which is often felt. But we have more ambitious views, if our position becomes such as to enable us to realise them. We wish to hold exhibitions, not of a showy or merely popular kind, but such as may have a suggestive value; and the first of these exhibitions is about to be held to-day. We hope to send out agents to report to us on industrial matters abroad; and, as a beginning in that way, I may point to an unpretending, but very well executed little work, which we have already issued, being a series of reports from artisans sent out by us to the Vienna Exhibition of last year. We are ready to hold funds in trust for purposes connected with ours, if anybody likes to place them in our hands, and if our status become such as to justify our undertaking that extra duty. We believe, lastly, that the holding of examinations in technical knowledge, followed by the granting of prizes and certificates to those who have earned them, may hereafter not unfitly come within the range of our duties.

Now, that is a pretty wide programme—whether we shall realise it or not the future must decide—but when I look at

the work done by the Mulhausen 'Société Industrielle,' which has in many respects been a model to us; when I see how in London the Society of Arts holds its own, and how frequently its discussions are reviewed and commented on by the London press; when I look at the Royal Institution, the Institute of Civil Engineers, and other minor, but still important, bodies of a similar character, I think it is clear that scientific associations having a practical end in view are playing a considerable and perhaps an increasing part in our social organisation, and I venture to add that if there is in England, or in the world, any place which is a natural and suitable centre for such a society it is this city of Manchester. We have started with good promise of support; if in any respect the execution of our designs should fall short of the intention, which I will not anticipate, we will not give it up; we will find out where the cause of the failure lies, and try again. Those who have taken this matter in hand have not done so in haste; they have turned it over in many ways before they began; and having begun they will not easily or quickly let it drop.

XXXVIII

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE LORD RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH—UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND TEACHING

EDINBURGH: DECEMBER 18, 1875

I WILL not waste time by expressing to you at length my gratitude for the high honour which you have conferred upon me. The chief place in a University like that of Edinburgh—even though honorary and temporary only—may well be an object of legitimate ambition equally to statesmen, to writers, and to men of science. You who confer that position are young; and it is always pleasant to men engaged in active duties to find that they have the sympathies of those who represent the future. You are students, with a wide range of ideas just opening to you, and I think you would not have chosen for your Rector any one whom you did not believe, however little qualified in other respects, to have a real and genuine sympathy with intellectual pursuits. On personal matters that is enough. And, now, how am I to address you? There is nothing less easy to a public speaker than to dwell on subjects which have at one time or another occupied everybody's mind, and to follow in a track which is beaten flat and plain by the feet of innumerable predecessors. On such topics you can scarcely avoid commonplace, except by wandering into paradox; and neither alternative is agreeable.

Therefore, gentlemen, do not suppose that I am here to preach you a lay sermon about your duties and your advantages in life. You know, better than I can tell you, what is to be said on these points. You know that your time here is

limited; that if youth can live in a world of ideas, manhood is too often absorbed in narrow and personal interests; that you will never have again the leisure and freedom for study which you now possess; and that on the use you make of these years the colour of your whole future life may depend. You know, too, that, for those of you who have to work in your respective professions for a living—and I take for granted that they form the great majority of the whole—the difference between an acquired habit of industry or of indolence resolves itself into this: that, in the one case, you will go to your daily duties cheerfully and happily: in the other, they will be to you a perpetual worry and vexation and grievance; while in either case the duties will equally have to be done under penalties which are not pleasant to contemplate. There is scarcely anything which is more entirely a matter of habit than working power. A man who has passed his life in a laborious profession is just as miserable when he finds himself with nothing to do as one who has done nothing for many years if suddenly thrown into heavy business.

We hear a great deal now and then of the mischief done to health by overwork; but I suspect, if cases of that kind come to be looked into, the mischief is generally due to mismanagement rather than to actual mental labour. Worry and excitement, and anxiety as to results, and nervous impatience to finish a task undertaken in haste, may often hurt and sometimes kill; intellectual exertion by itself—thought pure and simple—seldom, I believe, has injured anybody. One word I should like to say as to the object to which studies should be directed. I would not discourage honourable ambition. I am not blind to the advantages which a State gains by the existence among its citizens of a strong feeling of social emulation; but personally I am not a believer in what has been called the 'gospel of getting on.' It is, for one thing, a gospel which can only be preached to a small minority. To be successful in the world's sense means to have got over your neighbours' heads; to be rich, as the word is used, means to be richer than your neighbour;

and by the very nature of the case these are results which, if everybody aims at them, involve failure and disappointment to nine out of ten. We all start in life with the notion of beating our equals in the race; it is a useful stimulus at the outset of a career; but I think I have noticed that as they go on in life most men who are worth their salt think more and more of doing their work as it ought to be done, and less of the return in fame or gratified vanity which it is likely to bring them.

College successes no doubt give a good start in life, and are a useful preparation for that keen professional competition which, whether we like it or not, is inevitable in most employments. I do not, assuredly, undervalue them in that respect. But if we are to look at the naked truth of the matter, I do not think I could honestly tell you that the highest literary, or artistic, or scientific culture always leads to what the vulgar call the substantial prizes of life. Many very illiterate persons have accumulated large fortunes by their own energy and sharpness. Even in the most intellectual professions many men have risen high, and filled considerable posts, and enjoyed widespread reputations, who knew but little outside the range of their professional work, though no doubt they knew that thoroughly well. Do not understand me as denying or doubting that habits of industry and mental training are an advantage for active life; they are an advantage and a very great one; but what I would urge upon you is that devotion to study, if it is to be real and sincere, must rest on motives far stronger, reasons more conclusive than can be drawn from a calculation of chances in the great lottery of the world.

Culture may disappoint you if you seek it for what can be got out of it; it can never disappoint you if you seek it for itself. Say what we like about the lessening of social differences, there will always be a gulf not easily passed over, a difference which must make itself seen and felt, between the cultivated and the vacant intellect. The man who has read little and thought little, to whom history has no meaning and

for whom literature has no existence, may prosper in business, but he prepares for himself a dull existence and a melancholy old age. There are many such; and sometimes you see them toiling on to the last, determined, as they say, to die in harness, not because they have any farther need to work—not even because their work continues to interest them, but because they have no other interest and nothing else to turn to. I hardly know a more miserable alternative than for a wealthy and prosperous man either to exhaust his last years with needless labour—

Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease,

or else to sink into that vacuity and ennui which, to an active temperament, is often worse than even acute suffering.

But, gentlemen, that is not all. In our age—probably in most ages, but we can only speak of what we know—there is nothing more common among those who have read a little and thought a little than the union of strong convictions with very narrow intelligence. And next to the absence of convictions altogether, there is no mental condition that is socially less desirable, or politically more dangerous. '*Cave hominem unius libri*' is not an unmeaning phrase. No one so intolerant as the man who has got one idea firmly established in his head, and has not found room for a second. Sometimes he is the politician who thinks the British Constitution ought to be extended to all countries and all races; sometimes the theologian who believes that his own especial form of faith is destined to pervade the whole earth; sometimes the social reformer or philanthropist, who holds that the acceptance of his particular theory is all that is wanted to accomplish what such persons are apt to call the regeneration of mankind.

But most of us err more or less, I am afraid, in the same way. Those who possess few ideas are apt to be possessed by them. Many a man has died for a phrase which he did not understand; and many a man, having got hold of what may possibly be *a* truth, has regarded it ever after as *the* truth.

Now, ideas are like fire—good servants, but bad masters; and no one can feel sure of retaining his mental balance, if he thinks at all, who has not in some measure realised to himself the vast variety of points of view from which every great question can be apprehended. History has many lessons; and not the least important of these lessons, in an age of large theories and hasty generalities, is that we learn not to reason on matters which concern mankind from an experience limited both in time and space. To the ignorant man England is the world; the nineteenth century represents all time. To the student who has lived in the life of many countries and many ages, human existence is too complex to be embodied in any formula. He thinks of the disappointed expectations and the unfulfilled predictions which are the staple of history. He remembers how many burning questions have grown cold; how many immortal principles have not survived their authors; how small a space the great social or political problems of a few centuries ago take up in the records of our race; and he learns a lesson of wise and not unkindly scepticism. Napoleon predicting that within fifty years Europe would be either Republican or Cossack; Canning calling the South American Republics into existence, to redress the balance of the Old World; the French thinkers of the last century believing in the immediate downfall of what they called superstition; philanthropists, even in our own time, announcing that the great European wars had become out of date and impossible: these, and a hundred other instances, recur to his mind when sanguine men predict a future of unlimited progress, because progress has been the rule in Europe during the last 500 years; or when philosophers attempt to calculate the movements of the human mind as astronomers calculate the movements of a comet.

I do not wish unduly to magnify the benefits of literary culture; Nature will have her way; learning is not always wisdom, and it may even occasionally happen that a learned man shall be also a fool. But, at least, culture will save him from some of the most unpleasing forms which unwisdom can

assume. He is not likely to cant, and he is not likely to rant. He will not use cut-and-dry phrases without attaching any definite meaning to them—which I take to be the essence of cant; and he will not be inclined to treat very little matters as if they were big ones—which I take to be the secret of that peculiar kind of rhetoric which we call rant. And do not think that I am laying undue stress on trifles if I tell you of the value of a literary tone and habit of mind in teaching you how to speak and write. Words are things; 'Le style, c'est l'homme,' as the French say. You will seldom find a man credited with a clear judgment if he has caught the trick of expressing himself in an involved or pompous phraseology; and, on the other hand, many men have, and daily obtain a reputation for, greater capacity than they really possess, because they have acquired the art of putting their ideas, whatever these may be worth, in few and clear and well-selected words.

Of the gains derivable from natural science I do not trust myself to speak; my personal knowledge is too limited, and the subject is too vast. But so much as this I can see: that those who have in them a real and deep love of scientific research, whatever their position in other respects, are so far at least among the happiest of mankind. I do not tell you that to possess that taste—or rather to be possessed by it—is a matter of the will. I believe that with the most successful workers it is a question of temperament or of a predilection so early acquired as to resemble an instinct. But for those who have it, no passion is so absorbing, no labour is so assuredly its own reward (well that it is so, for other rewards are few); and they have the satisfaction of knowing that, while satisfying one of the deepest wants of their own natures, they are at the same time promoting in the most effectual manner the interests of mankind. Scientific discovery has this advantage over almost every other form of successful human effort, that its results are certain; that they are permanent; that whatever benefit grows out of them is world-wide. Not many of us can hope to extend the range of

knowledge in however minute a degree; but to know and to apply the knowledge that has been gained by others, to have an intelligent appreciation of what is going on round us, is in itself one of the highest and most enduring of pleasures.

The vast development of science in our time makes it idle for any man to attempt to do more than select some one head of it for special study. To take all knowledge for one's province was probably impossible even to Bacon, and in Bacon's day—though he did not think so; it would in our age be absurd. And I believe—speaking with that caution which one ought to observe when on ground with which one is not familiar—that for intellectual and self-regarding purposes the selection matters comparatively little. You cannot know more than a fraction of what has been done and thought—whether that fraction is a little larger or smaller matters not much; what is essential is to have mastered thoroughly what you do take in hand—to have acquired the scientific method and habit of thought; and in that I include accuracy of investigation, clearness of conception, and the conviction that under all phenomena, however confused the appearance they present, there is a regulating law, whether you can detect it or not. One great advantage of exact science, especially of mathematical science, is that it does not admit of half knowledge. You may listen to a lecture, or read a book on any subject of popular interest, and go away thinking that you have caught the speaker's or writer's general meaning, though you may not have followed his details; with mathematics you cannot do that; you must either know a problem so that you can work it out, or become aware by the failure to work it that you do not know it at all. And in a time like ours, with all its varied and multiplied subjects of thought, and its innumerable channels of publicity, when it is almost the normal condition of most persons to be discussing questions which they imperfectly understand, there is peculiar utility in a process which absolutely compels exactness of thought, and which makes half-knowledge an impossible condition.

We used to hear a great deal some years ago—more, I

think, than we do now—of the necessity of making science popular. I never have approved of that phrase, perhaps from not feeling sure what it means. You may make the results of science popular without much trouble; every child can be taught, for instance, the main facts which astronomy has brought to light, and the mass of mankind will accept them with just as implicit faith, and with just as much advantage to themselves, as they accepted in older times the systems which modern teaching has superseded. But that is not science. Science, in the strict sense of the word, can never be popular. It requires close attention, which to untrained persons is disagreeable, and the successful following of it presupposes either special and exceptional aptitude, or a greater devotion of time than the bulk of persons in any class are able or willing to give to a non-paying pursuit. Science, above all, needs leisure, and I hope it is not utopian to look forward to the possibility of a far ampler provision being made for its prosecution by competent persons than exists at present.

I do not refer merely or principally to help from the State; though, speaking for myself, I should not grudge it in such a cause. But the spirit of patriotism which animated founders of schools and colleges, and public benefactors of former days, is not extinct; in some directions it is more flourishing than ever. An American banker lately gave half a million to help the poor of London; a Scotch gentleman, I believe, has given the same sum within the last few years in aid of the Kirk of Scotland; money is never wanting at either end of this island when men see their way to make a good use of it. When have schools, hospitals, public parks, museums, institutes, been more abundant than at the present day? Science has no endowments, or next to none; but only because the interest in that class of subjects is comparatively new, and rich men, who want to do some good with their capital, have not looked much in that direction as yet.

Is it too sanguine a hope that we may see individual liberality take a form which hitherto it has rarely taken? Who knows how many discoveries might be worked out, how many conquests of man over Nature secured, if for, I don't

say a numerous body, but even for some fifty or a hundred picked men, such modest provision were made that they might be set apart, free from other cares, for the double duty of advancing and of diffusing science? Who can measure what has already been lost to England and to the world, when intellects capable of the highest kind of original work have been wasted, not by choice, but necessity, on the common drudgery of every-day life? I know very well that to some extent that must continue to be the case; it is visionary to contemplate a state of society in which every man will find exactly the employment that suits him; in human life, as in Nature, there will always be a vast apparent waste of power. But we may at least reduce that waste where we see it going on; original capacity is not so common that we can afford to throw it away, nor so difficult to discover that we may excuse ourselves by saying we did not see it.

I am quite aware that endowments of all sorts are discountenanced by a certain class of thinkers, of whom I speak with respect, but who, I think, argue from the abuse of a thing against its use. The fact remains that the most enduring and valuable work done in the line of pure science will not bring a shilling to the man who does it; and while that is so (and one does not see how it can be otherwise), there seems nothing unreasonable in saying that society shall, in one way or another, make provision for those who are doing so much for society. Nor do I see that the risk of jobbing in such matters is great. Men who work to make money, or men who care for reputation of the popular sort, do not choose such pursuits as those of which I am speaking. And making all allowance for the little jealousies and rivalries from which no profession is free, I believe that there is seldom any difficulty in picking out the best qualified candidates for professorships and appointments of that kind, where there is an honest wish to find them. I go into no detail. I indicate no special plan. I had rather, for my own part, see action taken by the community than by the State, or at least I should wish to see the community largely helping the action of the State; but whatever is done, or whoever does it, I think that more liberal

assistance in the prosecution of original scientific research is one of the recognised wants of our time.

How far that assistance can be obtained by the utilisation of ancient endowments is a question partly of principle, partly of detail. I do not agree with the extreme views which have been put forward on either side in regard to it. I cannot follow the reasoning of those who say that the State has no right to divert endowments from one purpose to another. There must be a regulating power somewhere, else changes which, by common consent, lapse of time has made necessary could not be effected. And whether that power is vested in a Court of Justice or in a Commission, it is equally the power of the State. To my mind, so far as right is concerned, the Legislature may do what it chooses in regard to any endowment, without injustice, provided only that the rights of living individuals are respected. How far it is politic to use that power is another matter. Push its exercise too far, and you kill the bird that lays the golden eggs. Men give or leave funds, not for the promotion of useful public purposes in the abstract, but for some special form of public usefulness that has taken their fancy. You never hear of a fortune left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to employ as he thinks best for the public service. One man cares for schools, another for hospitals, and so forth; and unless intending benefactors have a reasonable security that the general purpose for which they leave their money will be respected, the stream will soon dry up. More than that, I consider, they ought not to ask. Respect the founder's object, but use your own discretion as to the means; if you do not do the first, you will have no new endowments; if you neglect the last, those which you have will be of no use.

You will not expect me, in the few and desultory remarks which are all I can hope to lay before you, to enter into a comprehensive survey of the working of your University system, or into a comparison between it and that which prevails in England. One advantage you undoubtedly have here: your Universities are more popular, their benefits

extend to a larger class, and both rule and custom have combined to make access to them less expensive than with us in the South. In that respect I hope much will be done—something has been done already—to imitate the example which you have set. I suppose also it is certain that Scotland has a considerable priority in point of time as regards the variety of studies introduced. Nobody could now dispute that the old Oxford and Cambridge routine of classics and mathematics—classics predominating at the one University, and mathematics at the other—was unduly narrow and exclusive. It used to be literally true in my time, thirty years ago, that a Senior Wrangler might leave Cambridge, having taken the highest honour that Cambridge could give him, and yet with only a slight and rudimentary knowledge of anything outside the range of mathematical science; while those who went in for classical studies were subjected to the weary and unprofitable drudgery of cramming up a certain quantity of mathematics for the final examination, without which competition for classical honours was not allowed. I have a lively recollection of that process—the only distinct impression which it has left on my mind being this, that I should not have known, without that personal experience, with what marvellous rapidity knowledge crammed up for a special purpose and never assimilated is apt to disappear. In England, all that has been changed, and there is probably as great a variety of studies as here.

But it is not easy in avoiding one error to escape its opposite. You recollect the old saying of the human mind being like a drunken man on horseback: prop him up on one side, and he tumbles off on the other. And as our Universities are now, perhaps the chief danger is that where many things are attempted to be got up in a short time, they will not be learnt effectually. There is a battle which has been raging ever since I can remember between the supporters of teaching carried on by lectures mainly, and those whose faith is fixed in examinations. It is alleged against the examination system that it damps the zeal and

eagerness of voluntary inquiry; that it converts that which ought to be a means to an end into the end itself; that it exercises the memory too exclusively; that it confines men's reading to subjects which will 'pay,' as the phrase goes; and that subjects so studied, not for their own sakes, but to serve a special and temporary purpose, are apt to be dropped in weariness and disgust when that purpose has been served. It is contended, on the other hand, that by merely listening to lectures, unless some effort is made to reproduce what has been heard, no lasting impression is produced on the mind; that lecturing tends to a popular and theoretical, rather than to an exact and careful, treatment of questions discussed, and that where the knowledge required is not subjected to some test, men are apt to go away thinking they know a great deal more of the matter than they really do. That, I believe, is a fair summary of the arguments *pro* and *con*. It is not for me *tantas componere lites*, but I may say that there seems enough of truth in the objections raised on both sides to justify a serious consideration of them; and the inference I draw is, if you attend lectures, and rely on them mainly, test your own recollection of what you hear; write much, and write from memory, bearing in mind that while in listening the intellect is comparatively passive, its full activity is called out when you try to reproduce what you have listened to. If, on the other hand, a student is subjected to frequent examinations, he may be sure that his accuracy will be tested for him, and what he has most to guard against is a merely mechanical getting up of subjects—a mere giving out again of what has been poured into him, without any personal and independent exercise of thought.

There are various questions connected with University teaching on which I hesitate to express an opinion, which, however, I should perhaps not be justified in leaving wholly unnoticed. One is the question whether you can get out of these Universities all the work which they ought to do, and which in themselves they are qualified to do, unless some further and fuller provision for the education of boys be made

in what are called secondary schools. Nobody disputes that in regard to primary instruction Scotland has taken an early lead over the rest of the United Kingdom, and has kept it. But I am told by those who ought to know that in regard to good middle-class schools there is a deficiency—a deficiency, let me say, of which we are equally conscious on the other side the Border—that, in consequence, many young men come up here less prepared to profit by University teaching than they ought and might, and that that defect necessarily to some extent reacts on the teaching of the University itself. If that be so—I am compelled to take my information at second hand—there is a great opening for improvement.

The ideal of educational reformers I take to be this: that whenever in a village school any lad, however poor, has shown really exceptional ability, he may be enabled by some moderate pecuniary help to go on with his education at a higher-class school, and if he still continues to distinguish himself there, that he may be passed on to one of these Universities, either to take his chance in an open profession, or to devote himself to a life of learning and teaching, as his circumstances and his character may lead him. That is an ideal which to the full extent has never been realised in any country, nor, perhaps, will it be; but some approach towards it may be made, and I know of no more useful manner in which a capitalist could dispose of superfluous wealth, and at the same time preserve his own name in honourable remembrance—which, however it may be sneered at as vanity, I take to be not an unworthy nor a foolish ambition—than by helping to construct one of these social ladders, by which young men unfriended, but of intellect and activity, may climb up into a position which will give their faculties fair play.

Another question on which I believe opinion is much divided is whether competition, having so long been the rule among learners, shall be extended to teachers also; whether and under what conditions lectures shall be allowed to be given, in each branch of study, by others besides the pro-

fessors specially appointed for that purpose. It is argued in favour of such permission that competition stimulates energy, monopoly damps it; that even very capable and learned men may not always have the faculty of making such teaching acceptable; and that, in that not impossible case, it is better that the work should be done in part by some one else than that it should not be done at all. It is added that the system in question is already in force in the medical branch, and with good result; and that there is no reason to fear a different consequence if it be extended to Arts and to Law. The objection taken, if I understand it rightly, is that a competition of the kind proposed would discourage the best candidates from accepting professorships; would lower the status of the professors; and would lead both them and their rivals to compete for number rather than for quality in their classes, to neglect the higher students, and to aim preferably at popularity among those of an average or lower type. It is scarcely for me, new to the whole controversy, to pronounce who is right and who is wrong; if I hinted at a preference, I should say that the dangers of the change do not seem to me as great as they are represented, while the advantages are obvious. If the professor in possession is competent, he has immense advantages over any extra-academical rival. If with these advantages he cannot hold his own, that result would seem to be due either to some defect on his part—possibly to some want of sympathy with his audience—or to eminent merit in the competitor. In either case one does not see what is gained by sending the competitor away.

It only remains to offer you my sincere excuses for the imperfection of these remarks, put together under the pressure of many and laborious occupations; to thank you for the patience with which you have heard me; to congratulate you on the progress and prosperity of Edinburgh University, as set forth in the recent able Address of your Principal; and to wish for you all (a better wish it is not in my power to frame) that your time of preparation here may be so passed that in after life you may not only maintain, but increase, the reputation of this ancient and famous seat of learning.

XXXIX

THE CONSERVATIVE WORKING MAN—THE POSITION OF THE WORKING MAN—LIBERALISM

EDINBURGH: DECEMBER 18, 1875

MUCH as I have heard of Conservative feeling in Edinburgh, I confess that I was not prepared for the sight of an audience so vast as that which I am now about to address. You think, and I think, that any man who undertakes to make you a speech, whatever other great abilities he may or may not possess, should at least have the power of making himself heard. Now, my voice is not very powerful, and I am afraid that, let me do what I may, I shall not succeed in making myself audible to many who are present in this vast assemblage. But I will do my best; and if you cannot hear me, I beg you will at least have patience, and think it is my misfortune and not my fault. It is not often of late that I have come before an audience such as I have now the honour of addressing; not that I hold such gatherings as this to be a waste of time; on the contrary, they seem to me to serve a double purpose. They give to those who are engaged in public life an opportunity of saying many things which cannot be so conveniently said within the walls of Parliament; and they give to you, the public, a means of pressing upon political men, especially upon those who have, as is, unfortunately, my case, no constituents to represent, your views and your feelings with greater force than if we were left to gather them from the press. There has not of late been much to talk about or to fight about, and, occupied with duties[1] which have

[1] Lord Derby was at this time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

not allowed me any large amount of leisure, I have, as a rule, kept clear of meetings of this description. But I could not refuse your invitation; and, as you have asked me to address you, I make no apology for occupying your time.

When the large electoral change of 1867 was sanctioned by Parliament, not without some natural doubts and apprehensions as to its possible results, there was one thing which, I believe, nobody expected, and that was that the new constituency would place in power a Conservative Minister and a Conservative Government within seven years from the time of its creation. It was the fashion in the years between 1868 and 1874 to talk of a Conservative working man as an unreal being. I think he has shown the reality of his existence clearly by this time. Now the ground is changed, and the language held by our opponents is: 'Oh, poor fellows, they do not know what they are doing. They have no politics; they go entirely on personal preferences; and if the Conservative candidate is the more popular man locally, they vote for him and not for his opinions.' I do not hold with those who would exclude personal feeling and character from political choice. A man who has run straight in private life will probably do the same in Parliament. The members whom you send to Westminster are not mere voting machines. They are not like those persons on whom, by the American Constitution, the right of choosing a President rests, and who are merely nominees of their party, pledged to vote for the candidate of the party's selection, and have no individual voice in the matter. A member of the House of Commons exercises, and must exercise, a large and wide discretion on many questions as to which he has given no pledge, and as to which his constituency itself has, perhaps, hardly made up its mind. If, therefore, it be true that the Conservative working man looks to persons as well as to professions, if he does not think that the sole qualification for political life consists in a willingness to swallow any number of pledges—I, for one, say the Conservative working man is quite right; but I do not believe that the tendency to which I have referred is one which,

in any very considerable degree, has turned the fate of elections.

I believe that there is in every class, and in the working class as much as in any other, a Conservative feeling, which is deep and strong—a feeling which may at times be masked, and the influence of which may be overborne by some grievance of the day and some popular cry, but which reappears when these disturbing influences are removed. And when people ask why should working men be Conservative, I answer, why should they not? Of one thing they may be quite sure—that all disorder, all revolutionary tendencies, everything that creates popular panic or even general uneasiness, falls more directly and heavily on the working man than on the members of any other class. Whatever troubles the waters of society, whatever frightens the timid and the rich—and money as money is always timid—the artisan and the labourer are the first sufferers; the shopkeepers or the manufacturers raise their charges, but he loses his daily bread. I think that is a fair reason why working men should not be less interested than their neighbours in the maintenance of social order.

But, I may be asked, is it not to be expected that the working man will wish to improve the condition of his class? Can he, if he cares about anything outside his private concerns, not desire to see his fellow-workers in possession of greater comforts and advantages of life than they have now, and will he not, therefore, give his vote on the popular side? My answer to that is, that I accept the premisses, but I do not see that they lead up to the conclusions. Popular politicians never gave any man better wages or a better house to live in. They may, indeed, profess to remove grievances of a kind such as the law can deal with, but where are those grievances? What has become of them? Is the working man taxed above his fair share? Why, if he is a teetotaler, he contributes literally nothing to the revenue, except some thirty per cent. on the tea or coffee which he may use. Nearly every other article he consumes is altogether free. Income tax,

house tax, stamp duties, cannot touch him. If he likes his beer and tobacco—and I, for one, see no reason why he should not—he pays on these articles like everybody else; and, since we must have taxes which fall on luxuries, they are probably the fairest of all. Is he subject to exceptional legislation? So far from that, whenever any legislation of an exceptional kind has been passed of late years it has been in his favour, and not against him. In the case of the two Acts [1] of last Session amending the Labour Laws, Parliament has not hesitated to modify rules of law, rules long standing and still applicable to analogous cases, because they might be brought to bear hardly on members of Trades Unions. Take another instance. We are very jealous in Parliament, and most reasonably jealous, of any legislative interference about principles of demand and supply. We are always reluctant to extend the functions of the Executive and the Legislature beyond those which have been immemorially ascribed to them. As a general principle, we should say that the kind of house a man lived in was a matter between himself and his family; but in large towns great difficulty has been experienced by members of the artisan class in finding healthy dwellings, and Parliament has in consequence gone out of its ordinary course in giving to local authorities exceptional powers and exceptional facilities to meet that want.

Take another case. As a rule, the question whether a man is paid for work done by him in cash or otherwise is a question to be regulated entirely and absolutely by arrangement between employers and employed. It is a matter of free contract. That is the rule in all the ordinary transactions of life. But many years ago complaint was made that in some manufacturing industries the workman was unfairly dealt with, because he was paid partly in food, and other articles which he wanted he had to buy in a certain shop in which his employer was interested, and it was urged that he was thereby placed in a position of undue dependence

[1] See the Employers and Workmen Act, 1875, and the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875.

and constraint. There was a strong feeling on the subject, and Parliament again went out of its way to prohibit a practice, not in itself immoral nor contrary to economical rules, but which was judged to be open to abuse, and by a succession of Acts, called the Truck Acts, it has enforced the prohibition of paying the operative otherwise than in hard cash. How, again, is the working man situated as regards the possession of political power? Why, he is master of the situation. His class can, if it pleases, outvote all other classes put together. It is not likely to care or to wish to do so; but again I say, having under the British Constitution as it exists supreme political power in their hands, why on earth should working men be otherwise than Conservative when that Constitution is concerned?

It used to be the fashion to say, 'Look at America; look at the United States. There is a country with no wars, no debt, hardly any taxation. And every man has got a vote.' But since then the United States have had a tremendous civil war. They have got a debt, and a heavy one. They have got taxes which are a great deal more burdensome than ours, taking State and Federal taxation together. They have a Civil Service which, not to say anything offensive, is not generally considered as cleanhanded or as efficient as ours: and whereas in this country a change of popular feeling reflected in Parliament may upset any Government in a week, in America there is no reason why a President once elected should not during the four years of his tenure use the power of the Executive in a sense opposed to that of the Legislative Body. We wish nothing but good to our American friends. They have their ways, and we have ours; but, on the whole, I venture to think that in matters of administration and politics they may have as much to learn from us as we have from them. Great stress, again, is laid by a certain class of politicians on the supposed fact that in these islands only a rich man has a chance of becoming an owner of the soil, and that is held up as one of those wrongs which ought to be remedied before any poor man should call himself a Conserva-

tive. But how does the matter stand? In the first place, there is an enormous exaggeration as to the fact. It used to be asserted again and again, and even men so eminent as Mr. Mill and Mr. Bright repeated the saying, that the whole soil of the country was divided between 30,000 proprietors. I never believed that story, and I was fortunate enough some years ago to be able to induce the late Government to take steps to test its truth. We have not the full return yet, but I believe the number of owners will come out more nearly 600,000 than 30,000, or twenty times what it was put at. But why should we stop there? What is there in the state of our law to make us stop there? No man who reads the advertisements in the papers can venture to contend that there is not land enough for sale to meet all possible wants. If there be a wish among working men to become owners of some small piece of land, what is easier than to form companies which will buy up estates, and will divide them so that small lots may be purchased and the payments spread over a term of years, as is now done in the case of houses in towns? Whether such a speculation would answer or not I cannot decide; and, personally, I should not feel inclined to recommend any man whose savings were small to put them into land. But what I do say is that, if working men have that desire, there is no obstacle in our laws, none in our administrative arrangements, none even in our national habits, to make its gratification impossible or difficult. The sole obstacle in the way, the legal cost of transferring small pieces of land, has been dealt with by recent legislation,[1] and, we hope, swept away.

My argument, then, comes to this, that there is nothing in our laws and institutions as they exist to prevent working men from improving their condition to whatever point may be attainable by them, and that there is nothing to prevent their assuming a Conservative attitude towards these laws and institutions compatibly with self-respect and consistent with their honourable and natural feeling for their own class.

[1] See the Land Transfer Act, 1875.

Well, then, gentlemen, what is the other side of the question? A Conservative policy, as it seems to me, tells its own story—to distrust loud professions and large promises; to place no confidence in theories for the regeneration of mankind, however brilliant and ingenious; to believe only in that improvement which is steady and gradual, and accomplished step by step; to compare our actual condition, not with the ideal world which thinkers may have sketched out, but with the condition of other countries at the present day, and with our country at other times; to hold fast what we have till we are quite sure that we have got hold of something better instead. These are commonplace and familiar ideas, but they express well enough the prevailing tendency of the Conservative mind as you see it in these islands. You may agree or disagree with them, but at least you know what they mean. I am not equally sure that I do know what Liberalism in the party sense—the Liberalism of the great Liberal connections—is supposed to imply. The name was a very happy one, whoever hit upon it, because, according to the construction the speaker puts upon it, it may signify anything or nothing. For a long while I have been looking out for something like a definition of its meaning, but neither accomplished journalists nor M.P.'s on the stump have helped me much. On the Continent the word has a definite sense. A Liberal is there understood to be an opponent of priestly power and of the Roman Catholic Church; but that will not do here, for some of the strongest opponents of the Catholic priesthood are staunch Conservatives, and till very lately, and, indeed, as long as I sat in the House of Commons, the Liberal party in Parliament was supported by the votes of Ultramontane Irish Members. Probably it would be so still but for the Home Rule movement, which has made that alliance impossible. Does it imply equality among religious sects and hostility to ecclesiastical establishments? Hardly that, for the late respected leader of the Liberal party, most of his colleagues, and the bulk of what used to be called the Whig party, are steady supporters, on principle, of the English Establishment. Does it

mean respect for the constitutional as opposed to the despotic notions of government? But that is not the party distinction among us. Nobody that I ever heard of proposes to shut up the House of Commons or to gag the press. Does Liberalism, again, mean the principle of securing for the individual the utmost freedom from interference or from needless restrictions of law, compatible with public safety and convenience? There was a time, some thirty years ago, when that may have been accepted as at least a pretty accurate description, when the removal of personal restrictions was to a possible extent identified with Liberal politics; but it is not so now. On the contrary, there is no more marked feature of the new Radical creed than the strong disposition which it shows towards what I may call democratic despotism.

One, and that a very powerful, school of Liberals hold not only that every parent should be compelled to send his child to some school, which may be a reasonable proposition, but that only one kind of school shall be supported by the State, and all others discouraged and, if possible, extinguished by State competition. Another set of gentlemen, represented by Sir Wilfrid Lawson and the United Kingdom Alliance, think that, because they prefer water, the very essence of Liberalism consists in making it practically impossible for a man, unless he has a cellar of his own, to get himself a glass of beer; and it is a further indication of the same tendency that in modern legislation, as directed by the Liberal party, the old theory, right or wrong, of respecting freedom of contract is more and more disregarded, and, as in the case of the Irish Tenant Right Bill, parties are forbidden to contract themselves out of the provisions of the law. I do not want to go into details on that subject, which would lead me a long way, but I do affirm, and I am not afraid of being contradicted, that not absence of interference, but increased interference with the relations of individual life, is the distinctly marked tendency of the modern Liberal creed. That is a tendency not free from danger, for two reasons – first, because it throws on the State a variety of duties which the State is not accustomed or

well fitted to discharge; and next, because, as a consequence of that increase of State power, it intensifies the struggles of politics, since no man knows to what extent his business life and his home life may be interfered with by the legislation of an adverse majority. Still, I do not suppose that any Liberal member would take as his watchword increased restrictions on personal freedom. And I come back, therefore, to the question which I asked before, What is the essence of the Liberal creed, and what is that which all Liberals have and all Conservatives have not?

I want to argue the matter fairly. I do not wish to take advantage of accidental differences or to represent small cliques as though they were important sections of the party to which they belong; but the Permissive Bill party, the teetotalers—I will not call them the temperance party, because that is begging the question—are not a small section. They are important in numbers—not certainly in Parliamentary strength; but among the great town constituencies of England, and, I dare say, here also, they are stronger than mere numbers would make them, for they are animated by all the eagerness and enthusiasm of reformers. Nor can you call the question of Church Establishments a small one. It is a question so vast that even bold politicians do not like to touch it, but with half the Liberal party in favour of Disestablishment, and the other half against it, can it be said that Liberalism as such has any opinion on the subject? Oh, but we are told there is one vital point on which all Liberals are agreed, and that is the extension of the franchise. Well, are they agreed? Lord Hartington, the new leader in the House of Commons, to whose ability in that position I willingly bear my humble testimony, will not support household suffrage in the counties. Mr. Lowe, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and some others take the same view. Is that agreement? Can a party treat as its vital principle a question on which its own leader, just appointed, goes into the opposite lobby or stays away? I do not wish to speak ungenerously or unkindly of our political opponents; they have shown temper

in defeat and a commendable absence of factious spirit during the last two years. If they do not seem exactly to know where they are going or what they mean to do next, it is a situation in which many good men have been placed before, and will be again. For the time their function is that of criticism, it is not a difficult or a disagreeable duty, and I have no doubt they will perform it in a satisfactory manner. . . .

XL

POLITICAL AFFAIRS—THE FINANCIAL SITUATION—THE COLONIES THE EASTERN QUESTION—THE PURCHASE OF SHARES IN THE SUEZ CANAL

EDINBURGH: DECEMBER 19, 1875

You have paid me a high honour,[1] one of which any Minister or any public man may well be proud, and you will not doubt the sincerity of my thanks. For all the labours, the anxieties, and the responsibilities of public life—and these are not few—England offers one compensation and one reward; that reward is the good opinion of the community at large. Without that good opinion a political career would be a weary servitude. With it, or in the hope of obtaining it, we bear our burden contentedly, confident that justice is done to all who, according to the measure of their capacity, have endeavoured with an honest purpose to serve the State. And, gentlemen, I accept the honour which you confer upon me with all the more satisfaction because it is not one of a political character—using the word in its common party sense. I know that there are here present representatives of various political opinions, and I remember with pleasure that my immediate predecessor in the position which I hold in this hall was a gentleman with whose politics indeed I cannot profess entire sympathy, but whose clearness of intellect, decision of purpose, and straightforwardness of character have won him respect on both sides of the House of Commons.

[1] The freedom of the city of Edinburgh had just been conferred on Lord Derby.

Gentlemen, I shall not imitate Mr. Forster in addressing you at length on the topics of the day. This is the third occasion within the last twenty-four hours on which I find myself face to face with a large audience, and I hope you will accept that excuse for brevity—if, indeed, any excuse is wanted. Gentlemen, of matters which concern the internal administration of the country there is but little to be said. Political agitation is suspended by common consent; and, whether we like it or dislike it, or whether we are content simply to accept the fact, there is no question but that there exists a general willingness to postpone for the present large questions involving constitutional change. Is that a reason why Parliament should be idle? I think it is exactly the reverse. Large measures crowd out little ones. In times of excitement and turmoil there is a mass of departmental legislation which cannot get itself attended to, and that arrear it is our object, in the intervals of tranquillity, to try and work off. I will not name particular subjects, because if I did the public will suppose that I am announcing a list of measures for next year, and that I am not in a position to do. But I may say this much, that, except the Foreign Office, which has comparatively little to do with legislation, there is hardly one Government Department which has not Bills enough on hand to occupy a whole Session if it were allowed to do so. Look at the number of Royal Commissions that have been appointed and of Committees that have sat in the last twenty years to report upon various administrative matters. How many of these reports have been acted upon? One gets put aside as not urgent; another as too dangerous to meddle with, because of the conflict of interests it involves; a third, because opinion is not ripe. There is a whole literature of Blue Books on the Patent Laws; another on the Marriage Laws; a third on the pollution of rivers. I mention these, not because they are to be dealt with forthwith, but only as instances and illustrations; and any one who has watched half a dozen Sessions of Parliament could find you plenty more. Whatever Parliament in our day suffers from, it will not be from

want of work to do. I know that the kind of work I indicate is not the most agreeable. It requires attention which it does not stimulate, and there is little in it to excite that instinct of pugnacity which is the natural counterpoise to the dulness of long debates. But, dull or not, it has to be done; and I hope that, in regard to legislation, 1876 will not be barren.

In regard to the material prosperity of the country, present and prospective, I am afraid I can give you no better consolation than that which was contained in a recent speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is clear that we must look forward to a period of comparative depression in trade. You cannot have exports falling off, as they have done in the last two years, without the revenue being injured by the diminution of employment which that falling-off indicates. The only wonder to my mind is that the effect has not been produced earlier. The working classes are always the last to be affected, I suppose because a considerable contraction of business cannot take place at once. Existing orders must be worked off, and men go on at a loss for the chance of things mending. But it reaches them at last. It is reaching them now, and we must not expect that the revenue of the next year or two will show its normal elasticity. But I think we may feel confident that the interval of depression will not continue long. It is the natural rebound from the extraordinary activity of the years between 1870 and 1874. Most people felt at that time that the pace was too good to last, and we may be glad that the reaction is not more severe. I cannot share the apprehensions of those who believe that the highest point of our industrial prosperity has been reached. That is a prediction which has been uttered very often before, and with just as much apparent cause. We hear of high wages and their influence on production, and, of course, there is something to be said in that sense; but we must remember that the same causes which affect us are operating also in other countries with which we compete, and that the evil, if it be an evil, brings its own cure; for, if high wages check

production, diminished production, in its turn, checks the rise of wages. As a matter of fact, the nation whose competition we have most reason to apprehend is the one nation in which wages are higher than they are here—I mean the United States.

There is no urgent demand at present for reduced taxation; and the one thing that seems to me important in that connection is that, in good times or in bad times, we should hold on steadily to the principle of doing something to reduce debt. I look on that as, perhaps, the most vital question of internal policy in our day. We are not bearing half the financial burden, in proportion to our means, that was borne by our grandfathers—probably not more than a third; and if every great war is to increase our liabilities, and every interval of peace to leave them unreduced, there can be only one end, whether it comes sooner or later. I venture to lay stress on that, because it is in no sense a party question. It is a question on which I believe Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone would be agreed in principle. It is a question between foresight and prudence and courage on the one side, and recklessness and laziness and ignorance on the other. We have made a beginning. It has been called a small one, but if the public are prepared to go on merely as we are doing now, without any increase of charge—to go on, that is, devoting 28,000,000*l.* yearly to interest and sinking fund on our present debt, which is the arrangement now in force—by that arrangement we shall clear off 4,000,000*l.* a year of indebtedness now, and in 1885, when the terminable annuities drop in, we shall be clearing it off at the rate of about 8,000,000*l.* a year. Even that latter figure is not to my mind at all too much, and that cannot be said to impose any injurious burden on the industry of the nation. Speaking on this subject, I do not wish to conceal from you the extreme difficulty which we or our successors in the next few years, whoever they may be, will find in keeping down the increase of public expenditure. That difficulty, if we are to make the best of it, is one consequence of a condition of general well-

being. It is easy to point to the Estimates of forty years ago, and to draw invidious contrasts. But forty years ago an able-bodied Irishman thought himself liberally paid at one shilling a day; and no wonder, then, that you could get soldiers and sailors cheap. Ships, guns, fortifications, barracks—everything which involves the application of human labour costs more than it did. Salaries cannot be further reduced; sinecures are gone. We shall use our best endeavours to spare the public pocket, but there is a limit beyond which economy cannot be carried with safety; and I am bound to tell you I think we are not far from that limit now.

Gentlemen, on our relations with the Colonies a word or two will be enough. I read with admiration and enjoyment the excellent speech lately delivered by Mr. Forster on that subject, and I have the less reason to follow him as I agree in most, if not in all, of what he said. There has been a change in regard to colonial policy within the last twenty-five years which is little less than extraordinary. When I entered Parliament in 1849, and for years afterwards, a member who should have laid stress on the importance of keeping up the connection between the Colonies and the mother country would have been set down by advanced thinkers as holding respectable, but old-fashioned and obsolete, ideas. The doctrine most in favour was that a Colonial Empire added nothing to real strength, involved needless expense, and increased the liability to war. Now, everybody is for holding on to the Colonies which we have got; and a good many people seem to be in favour of finding new ones. I do not hold, for my part, that there is any practical use in trying to look far into futurity when we are dealing with the relations which ought to exist between England and such communities as Australia and Canada. We have never, in this country, been good at laying down and acting upon far-reaching schemes of policy. Our greatest success has been won by men who did what lay before them to do, but who never dreamed of the results which they helped to bring about. The founders of the East India Company never contemplated

an Indian Empire, and the Ministry which first colonised Australia thought of nothing except of getting rid conveniently of convicts who were troublesome at home. And as it has been, so it will be. I have seen many plans for connecting Australia and Canada more closely with this country, but never yet one that even looked as if it would work; and if the Empire is to be kept together I think we must expect that result not so much from political machinery, however ingenious, as from the steady and careful maintenance on our side of cordial relations with our Colonies. Help freely given when really wanted, all needless show of control avoided, abstinence from hasty and reckless criticism, consideration for the peculiar sensitiveness which is the invariable characteristic of young communities—these things, at least, are in our power; and they will go far to prevent a wish for separation from growing up in any English-speaking Colony now under the British Crown.

As regards our relations with foreign countries, for which I am more especially responsible, you will expect me to remain not altogether silent; and I can say with truth that I have no announcement to make on that subject which is not of a satisfactory character. No doubt there are many things we should be glad to see otherwise than as they are. It is not agreeable to think of the four great military States of Europe having between them trained or in training for war something like 7,000,000 men, and, as well as I can make out, the estimate I give you is not above the present reality. It is not exactly in accordance with our notions of freedom and peace that there should be on the Continent hardly any man of military age who is not likely to be taken at short notice from his business and his home and sent to fight at a distance from his own country because his Government and some other Government have got into a quarrel, of the merits of which he is in all probability profoundly ignorant. That is not precisely an ideal condition of civilisation. But it does not follow, because these forces are there, that they should necessarily be used. The very magnitude of the stakes that

are played for makes even bold players cautious. Enormous as the preparations for war are—or shall I call them precautions against war?—I see no evidence of a desire to employ them. I believe that the Governments of Europe desire peace, and peace can generally be maintained when there is the wish to maintain it.

We have at this moment before us—and when I say *we* I mean not the English Cabinet alone but the various Cabinets of Europe—a question of which we are not likely to hear the last for a long while—a question the final solution of which nobody clearly foresees, and in regard to which I suppose nothing more is possible at present than temporary expedients to meet the emergency of the time. You know the circumstances as well as I do. An outbreak in the Turkish dominions, slight in the first instance, not encouraged by foreign Powers, and which might have been easily put down by prompt action, was neglected until it grew into a serious insurrection. Even then it seemed likely to yield when means of repression were at last employed. Three months ago the best informed persons for the most part thought it unlikely to spread far or to last long; but then came a financial collapse, the result of a long course of waste and maladministration, and a declaration of inability on the part of the Porte to pay more than ten shillings in the pound. Naturally that circumstance disheartened the friends of Turkey and stimulated her opponents. The insurrection gained ground; and though it is not even now very formidable from a military point of view, and though most of the victories which you read of as gained by the insurgents are largely exaggerated, still the excitement in the minds of the adjoining population is so great that no man can feel sure that the area of disturbance will not be indefinitely enlarged; this the Governments of Austria and Russia are, I believe, perfectly sincere in wishing to prevent. They have their reasons for not desiring to open the whole Eastern question just now; and, at the risk of being thought credulous by some people, I repeat it as my conviction that they are genuinely

anxious to see peace and order restored. You see by the newspapers that a plan is about to be proposed by Austria as a basis for the pacification of these disturbed provinces. The purport of that plan I do not yet know; and, if I did, I should not be justified in making it a subject of public discussion here. But this you will all feel, that the difficulty of dealing with the internal affairs of a foreign country is in any case immense. If you give only general advice, nothing comes of it. If you go into detail, there is among half a dozen advisers every chance of disagreement; and even if they agree, a committee of distinguished foreigners is not a very convenient body for directing the administration of a State.

Again, to deal with old-standing feuds of religion and race is work which eminently requires a strong and impartial Government; but a Government which has constantly to lean on foreign advice and assistance cannot be strong, and unless it has force enough at its command in suppressing local feuds to be independent of local support, it can with difficulty be impartial. How is foreign influence to be usefully employed without lessening native responsibility? How are the revolted subjects of a foreign State to be conciliated into submission without creating a feeling on their part that they are living under a divided allegiance and a foreign Protectorate? These are some of the questions which occur. I refer to them, not in order to lead you to any foregone conclusion, but that you may appreciate the grave difficulties of the work which European diplomacy has been compelled to undertake. You may wish us well through it; but do not be unreasonably dissatisfied if the solution arrived at is not all that we might desire.

Of an affair which is much talked of just now—the purchase of the shares in the Suez Canal—I will say next to nothing in this room; partly because, in presence of another audience, I referred to it last night;[1] partly because, on the

[1] The following is the passage here referred to:—'You may have seen in the newspapers that there has been a good deal of sensation both abroad and at

general principles of the transaction, there is nothing to be explained, and details are better reserved for Parliament; partly, also, because it is a transaction on which opinions may reasonably differ; and I feel bound, in speaking here, to avoid as far as I can any topic of possible controversy. I always remember, moreover, the French saying, to the effect that self-excuse is self-accusation, and in this case I do not seem to feel as if excuses were required. We had to deal, in some haste, with a wholly unforeseen contingency. We had to

home created by the transaction into which we have entered by buying up some of the shares of the Suez Canal. I hold that to have been a wise step—it has certainly been a popular one, and I am prepared to defend it if necessary. But I must add that it would not have been a wise step nor an honest one if it had borne the construction which has been occasionally placed upon it. It is hardly necessary to disclaim any such notions as those which have been imputed to us—a wish to establish a Protectorate over Egypt, an interested reversal of our policy on the whole Eastern question, or an intention to take part in a general scramble which does not belong to us. We wanted and we have obtained additional security for that which is to us a necessity—free and uninterrupted passage through Egypt to India. We felt it to be essential that the great highway over which we have even now more than three-fourths of the traffic should not be exclusively in the hands of the foreign shareholders of a foreign Company. An opportunity was afforded us of acquiring a right in it, and that opportunity we used. There was no deep-laid scheme in the matter. We had not a week to consider it from the first moment we heard that the sale was intended, and our first idea was not so much to buy the property for ourselves as to prevent it from changing hands at all. I am happy to believe that in foreign countries there has been little, if any, of the jealousy and suspicion excited which was predicted by some persons as a probable consequence. We have stated clearly what we want, and why we want it, and Europe is accustomed to believe what we say. We seek no exclusion, no monopoly, only a secure passage for ourselves, and the same security we are willing that all the world should enjoy. As to the financial aspect of the bargain, that is not the most important. I see no reason why the State should lose a penny by it in the end. We have taken on ourselves a grave responsibility, but it is a mistake to suppose, as I have seen it supposed, that we have in any degree encroached on the freedom and authority of Parliament. Parliament is perfectly free to ratify or to reject the bargain. If it were rejected, which I do not for a moment contemplate, our course as a Government would be clear. But we have pledged nobody except ourselves. The House of Commons will have the whole matter in its own hands when it assembles; and, for my part, I do not shrink from any criticism, however severe, from any scrutiny, however jealous and minute. Gentlemen, I have detained you longer than I intended. It only remains for me to thank you for the great patience with which you have heard me, and for the cordiality of the reception you have given me to-night.'

take on ourselves either way an unusual responsibility. We did not hesitate; and we shall appeal confidently to Parliament to ratify our decision. I would not have touched on this subject even as lightly as I have done but that I thought that to avoid it wholly at the present moment, especially after the allusions of the Lord Provost, might look like an undue affectation of reserve.

XLI

THE EASTERN QUESTION—THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—REFUSAL TO JOIN IN BERLIN MEMORANDUM—MOVEMENT OF THE FLEET TO BESIKA BAY—THE POSITION OF THE GREAT POWERS

FOREIGN OFFICE, LONDON: JULY 15, 1876

I AM not paying you an idle compliment when I say that in all such official and Parliamentary experience as I have had, whether as a Minister receiving deputations, or as a Member of Parliament attending deputations, I never had the pleasure of meeting any deputation more important than this, whether with regard to the persons who compose it, the representative character in which they come here, the depth and force of public opinion which you undoubtedly represent, or the gravity and importance of the question with which you have come here to deal. I have read your memorial with close and careful attention, I have listened to all that has been said in this room, and I cannot sufficiently express my approval, if I may say so, of the brevity and terseness with which it has been said. I have no hesitation in telling you, in reply, that although there are some expressions in this memorial with which I could not agree, and although some things are said as to which I should prefer to reserve my opinion, still, as regards the material part of the question—the conclusion to which you come—namely, your desire that the Government should observe a policy of strict neutrality except where it may be able to interpose its friendly offices to hasten the close of the complication—I say as regards that expression of opinion, your feeling is absolutely and entirely mine. I noted what was said by your distinguished leader,

Mr. Bright, that there was no disposition to express suspicion or to throw blame upon the Government; and for my own part, so far from thinking that you are doing anything unwise or premature in coming here to express your opinion with regard to events which are not, indeed, impending, which you do not suppose to be impending, but which you consider as under certain contingencies possible—so far from thinking such an expression of opinion on your part premature, I am very glad, and I think that any Minister who stands in my position would be glad to know in time what your opinion and that of the country is.

I have often thought that it is one of the most difficult parts of the duty of a Minister in a Parliamentary country that, being, as he is in practice, the servant of Parliament and of the public, as well as of the Queen, he does not always receive his instructions from his employers beforehand, but is left to guess what it is that they would desire him to do, and that he only ascertains their real feeling when he finds that he has gone against it. I hope that there is no risk of anything like that in our present case. I will just refer to one remark by a gentleman who spoke here, who, while admitting that reticence is necessary while negotiations are going on, said that the effect of the silence of the Government had been unfortunate. Now, I must beg you to remember in the first place that we have not refused to answer the questions that have been put to us. And in the next place, and this is, perhaps, a more important fact, that the silence we have maintained for a certain period, and the keeping back of official correspondence, was simply maintained so long as those negotiations were going on. Many people expected, though I cannot say that I was very sanguine on the subject, that they would end in preventing the war. It would have been obviously inconvenient, while there were hopes that the quarrel would be settled by pacific means, to publish facts and expressions of opinion which could not fail to stimulate the passions of both sides. But from the day it became evident that our hopes were in vain, that the crisis had come,

and that war, in spite of the efforts of all Europe, would come to pass, we stated that all reserve was at an end, and that we were prepared to lay the correspondence before Parliament. If it has not yet been laid before Parliament, it will be presented in the course of the next three or four days, and any delay that may now have occurred will have been solely due to its voluminous character.

Now, gentlemen, I think, if I understand you right, you came here to express the apprehension which you think is generally entertained, or at least widely entertained, that in consequence of the turn which events are taking, and possibly in consequence of something which our Government may have done, or abstained from doing, we may find ourselves committed to support one party in this quarrel. And a gentleman whom I always listen to with respect, a gentleman who sits on my own side of Parliament, named two circumstances which tended, as he thought, to produce that impression on the public mind. One of those was our refusal to join in what has been called the Berlin Memorandum. I do not call it the Berlin Note, because the Note founded on it was never presented. The other was the sending of ships of war to Besika Bay. And it was said that an apprehension was felt that we are prepared to take part in protecting Turkey not only against external aggression, but also against internal dismemberment. Now, gentlemen, as regards the Berlin Memorandum, the reasons why we declined to join in taking that step will be found stated in the papers which will be laid before Parliament in a very short time. I need not go into that fully, but it is quite enough to say that we did so solely upon the ground which I stated the other day in the House of Lords, namely, that we thought the particular plan proposed in that Memorandum to be one which would not work. We did not believe that the Porte would be willing to accept it; we felt quite sure that a considerable body, at any rate, of the insurgents, on their side, would not accept it; and more than that, knowing it, as we did, to be the result of a compromise come to by Governments who, though anxious

to act together, were not entirely agreed as to the course they should take, we entertained the apprehension that if it came to be worked out in practice different parties would put different constructions upon the same words, and we should end, as such compromises do end sometimes, in a general misunderstanding. That was the reason for the course we took with regard to that matter; and, although I must not violate official confidence, yet I think I may say that I believe our action in that respect has not been viewed with disfavour even in quarters where at first it was not approved and not understood.

With regard to the bringing up of the English fleet to Besika Bay, there again you will have in Parliament fuller and more detailed explanations than it is possible for me to give here; but I may say this in passing—that it is an act upon which a construction has been put very different from that which would have been put if those who criticise it had been following out step by step the course of events which led to it. At the time when it was supposed that the presentation of that Berlin Note was about to be made, and when the fall of the late Sultan was impending, the state of things in Constantinople, and in the country near Constantinople, was one calculated to inspire serious apprehension as to what might ensue. The late Sultan was well known to be in a condition not far removed from insanity; it was notorious that discontent and disaffection universally prevailed; the wildest reports were circulated as to the intentions of the Powers and as to the steps which might be expected to be taken by them against the Mahommedans as a body—in short, the excitement was so general that it was impossible for any one to be sure that it might not have led to the breaking out of a sanguinary civil war, involving the massacre of British subjects and unprotected foreigners. I am just reminded—the matter will be in your recollection—that previously to that step being taken, and immediately before it, two foreign Consuls had been murdered under circumstances which showed a strong and general excitement against

foreigners. In these circumstances the Ambassadors of the Powers met together. They consulted for the common safety, and they unanimously agreed as to the expediency of obtaining for unoffending persons, and as a security against disorder, such armed force as it was possible to obtain. The initiative in the matter, therefore, was taken from Constantinople, and not from here, although I entirely and fully approve the step, and take the full responsibility of it; and perhaps it is as well you should recollect—and it is not generally understood in this country—it was not a step taken by the English Government and the English Ambassador alone. It was a step taken by us simply as one of, and acting in concert with, the other Great Powers. It does happen that, when you talk of fleets, ours is considerably the biggest, and, therefore, more attention was called to its being brought up than in the case of the others; but the facts are generally as I have stated them, and, so stated, I think you will admit that they do not lead to the inference which has popularly been drawn.

Now, I quite agree in what was said by a gentleman who spoke tersely and very much to the purpose as to the necessary limits of human sagacity in political matters. We can see what is immediately before us—I do not know that all of us even do that—but it is very difficult to judge of anything beyond the immediate future. But so far as it is possible for any one to forecast the future of events, I think it is the most improbable thing in the world that, in consequence of anything that is now passing within the limits of the Turkish Empire, a general European war should ensue. That seems to me one of those hypotheses which are so remote that it is scarcely worth while to speculate upon it. I do not see the quarter from which the war is to come. One must discuss with some reserve the position and the tendencies of foreign Governments. France and Italy obviously, for financial and other reasons, are utterly indisposed to take any step which would create general disturbance, and it is well known that the German Government, and I believe the German

people also, having no interests which directly connect them with the East, regard this question with far less interest than is felt in it in other parts of Europe. In point of fact, I do not think I should be going beyond the truth if I said that they only regard it as important, from their point of view, just in so far as it might lead to complications in other parts of Europe.

There remain only ourselves and Austria and Russia. Now, I cannot so insult your understandings as to speculate or to assume that there could be any one here who supposes that England wants to bring about a war. The very utmost, I think, to which any apprehensions have reached is a fear that, against our feelings and against our interest, we might be dragged into war. There is no party and no set of men in this country who would not regard a European war as the greatest of misfortunes. Austria has a position which is peculiar, and difficulties of her own. She has that dual system of administration which, in her circumstances, is, no doubt, a necessity, but which renders the difficulty of an enterprising and aggressive policy greater than it otherwise would be. She has within her Empire a great diversity of races, as we all know, and you may be quite sure that, if it is only in the interest of her own security, which any great convulsion in that part of Europe would disturb as much, or endanger almost as much, as that of Turkey itself—you may be sure that, from reasons of self-interest, if from no others, the Austrian Government will not desire to break the peace. Then, you will say, What about the Government and the people of Russia? Well, everybody knows, and I own, that there is among a large part of the Russian population a very strong sympathy for the insurgent movement which is now going on in Turkey. There is, I will say, a powerful party there which desires, not, as is often said, mere relief from oppression of a province here or a province there—that is not the real question at issue—but a party which desires the formation of a powerful and important Slavonic Empire under Russian guidance and direction. But it is one thing to say

that the party exists, and even that it is powerful, and it is another thing to say that the power of action is in its hands. If any one thing is certain in this world, it is certain that the Emperor of Russia, upon whose personal will and disposition more turns than upon that of any other man, is a sincere lover of peace. There are other reasons, such as the condition of Russian finance, the difficulties, perhaps greater than we are aware of here, of Russian administration, the enormous cost of the late Asiatic conquests, and various other causes which I need not go into, which make an aggressive policy one at the present time utterly unsuited to the policy of the Russian Empire. And if I required any additional evidence of what I am saying I should find it in the fact of that understanding to which I may refer, because it has been made public in the papers—I mean that understanding recently arrived at between the Emperor of Austria and the Emperor of Russia in their recent interview, which proceeds entirely upon the bases which you laid down, and which I assent to—namely, that of rigid and absolute non-intervention while this struggle continues. Such non-intervention does not, of course, exclude any efforts of mediation which may seem calculated to lead to good results; but, as I understand, the condition expressly added to the arrangement come to is that, if anything of the kind is attempted, it is to be done, if possible, by the concert of all the European Powers.

Now, gentlemen, I say again, I do not see what, in these circumstances, there is to lead to the apprehension of war. You do not, I think, expect or wish me to tell all the world that we have nothing to do with the East, that we mean to give no advice, to exercise no influence, to cancel all Treaties, and to profess entire indifference to what is going on. In point of fact, since I entered this room one of the gentlemen here addressed me in an exactly opposite sense, hoping that, of course by peaceful means, we should do what we could to promote peace. Now, that doctrine of absolute indifference is not one which this country ever has professed, and I do not think it is one which would be popular with the nation at

large. We have a great position in Europe, and with nations, as well as individuals, a great position involves heavy responsibilities, and we cannot absolutely decline to accept those responsibilities. If every nation which had reached a certain stage of civilisation were to adopt the principle of non-intervention in its absolute and extreme form, and say, 'We will never intervene in any international question except where our own interests are touched,' obviously the effect of that would be to leave the regulation of all international affairs to nations which have not reached that stage of civilisation. If the voice of England in questions such as those which we are now discussing were to be silenced altogether, there would be one voice less heard on the side of peace. No one is more strongly for non-intervention within all reasonable and practical limits than I have been and am;[1] but we must push no doctrine to an extreme, and an absolute declaration of non-intervention under all circumstances is a declaration of international anarchy, and I need not tell you that international anarchy does not mean either international peace or progress.

Gentlemen, I have detained you at some length. I believe you wished me to speak to you frankly. We have done what was in our power to prevent this war from breaking out. In that we failed. We shall now do what is in our power to keep it within certain limits. As regards intervention between Turkey and the subjects of the Porte, or between Turkey and the semi-independent States which form part of the Turkish Empire, that is a question which has never been so much as entertained. We will endeavour to impress that view upon others, and I have every reason to hope that we shall succeed. If, as it has been said, the Turkish Empire is in a state of decay from internal causes—that is a question

[1] In the course of a reply to a deputation on the Eastern Question, on November 29, 1877, Lord Derby used the following words: 'For my part, believing that unless a war is necessary it is a crime, I think we ought to be most careful to do and to say nothing which may tend unnecessarily to bring it about.' They should be read with the qualification which follows above.

upon which I pronounce no opinion—but if that is so, it is clear that merely external assistance can be no remedy. The utmost that can be asked of us is to see fair play. We undertook, undoubtedly, twenty years ago, to guarantee the sick man against murder, but we never undertook to guarantee him against suicide or sudden death. Now that is in a few words our policy as regards this war.

XLII

THE EASTERN QUESTION

Reply to a Deputation of Working Men—Foreign Office, London: September 11, 1876

I have listened, I need not say with care and attention, to the remarks which you have addressed to me. I have listened to them also with considerable interest, knowing as I do the representative character of this deputation. I am bound to acknowledge the courtesy and fairness of the language which you have held towards the Government, and I willingly accept the assurances which you have given, and, indeed, which the tone of your address rendered almost superfluous, that you have not come here in any party spirit, but that you wish to impress upon those who are responsible for the conduct of executive affairs your view of the situation in which we are placed. That being so, you will not expect me to waste your time and my own in defending myself and my colleagues against the various imputations which have been thrown out against us by many writers and speakers in the excitement which now prevails. But, as these imputations have been so frequently repeated—as they received so much support from the speech of the gentleman who addressed us last (the Rev. Mr. Denton), although the language used by him was courteous—as they have, at any rate, been repeated so frequently out of doors, and as I shall have at this time of the year so few opportunities of addressing the public, probably you will not think that I am unnecessarily occupying your time if I touch on that subject for a moment.

Now, I am not going to complain of utterances of the kind I have referred to, however wild and vehement some of them

have been. It is natural enough that people should be deeply agitated and pained by narratives, especially skilful and artistic narratives, of those lamentable and disgusting acts of which we have heard so much ; and it is equally natural that, when people are agitated in that way, they should wish to have somebody to find fault with, somebody to make responsible ; and, as they cannot in any practical manner make the Turkish Government responsible, it is not unnatural they should wish to throw the blame upon those who happen to be within their reach. We have been told that we have shown indifference to these great crimes that have been committed. Considering that we never heard of them until after they had taken place, I am quite unable to understand the meaning of that charge, or in what manner any public display of our feeling in regard to these occurrences could have had a practical effect. But I may just point out this to you, that, setting aside for a moment all other considerations, English Ministers are the very last people who can be indifferent to such acts as those to which you have referred. I am not looking at these deeds now from the point of view of humanity ; but there can be no question that they have enormously, immeasurably increased the difficulties of a situation which was already sufficiently difficult and complicated. Nobody, I suppose, doubts that the British Government is sincerely anxious to bring about a peaceable and a satisfactory settlement of this Eastern disturbance ; nobody, I suppose, doubts but that the feeling created by these Bulgarian atrocities has placed fresh obstacles in the way of such a settlement. Gentlemen, to tell us that we are indifferent to these acts is to tell us in effect that we are indifferent as to whether we succeed or fail in the objects we have in view ; and that it is to us a matter of unconcern whether or not we are able to put an end to a state of things which—I agree with the gentlemen who spoke here—is fraught with disquiet and even danger to Europe. Gentlemen, that is a kind of criticism which I think I may leave to your common sense.

Then, again, we are told—and Mr. Denton referred to

that charge as if, partly at least, acquiescing in its truth—we are told that we are in some measure responsible for what has taken place, inasmuch as without the assurance of English sympathy and support the Turks never would have ventured on committing the acts which they had committed. The argument, as well as I understand it, is this: 'You supported the Turkish Government in refusing and opposing certain propositions that were made to them; you sent the British fleet to Besika Bay, and by so doing you gave moral, and even, in a certain sense, material assistance to the Turks, and you are therefore responsible for this outbreak of a fanatical spirit among the Turkish population.' Now, if people who argue in that way will only take the trouble—and it is not much to ask them—to look into the narrative of what has actually happened, they will see that the theory is rendered untenable by the mere dates of the various events referred to.

We had in the winter, so far from supporting Turkey against the Christian populations, agreed to the Austrian proposition, which was naturally very unpalatable to the Porte. Our refusal to join in the Berlin Memorandum, to which I will refer presently, was not resolved on until May 16, nor was the despatch announcing it dated till May 19. Well, the fleet was sent for by Sir Henry Elliot—and sent for, I need not remind you, with the concurrence of all the other Ambassadors, who also telegraphed for their fleets. It was brought up for the express purpose of protecting the unarmed population against outbreaks which were possible at that moment. The fleet did not begin to arrive till May 26—I say begin to arrive, because, to the best of my recollection, only two or three ships came at first, and the squadron was afterwards reinforced. Now, the great bulk of these wretched outrages and excesses took place, according to the statements which are before us, in the early part and the middle of the month of May—that is, some days before the British fleet had been sent for, or before anybody could have known that it was likely to be sent for, and a little, though

not a considerable, time before our public refusal to join in the Berlin Memorandum.

What, therefore, the public is asked to believe is that these occurrences were caused in part by the action of the British Government, though that action had not taken place until the majority of those atrocities had been perpetrated. Now, if it were worth while, I think I might push that part of the argument further. I might ask—you can judge for yourselves, however—is it likely that the horde of ruffians and savages by whom these acts were committed, no one of whom, probably, could read or write, or ever saw a newspaper in his life—is it likely that those persons should have been influenced by a knowledge of the relationship between England and the Porte? But this I do know: among the more educated classes of Turkey—among those who really know something of what is going on—the effect of believing, if they did believe, that they had the support of England, so far from encouraging to acts of fanaticism and massacre, was calculated to have an exactly contrary effect. That is a matter as to which you may use your own discretion. If they counted on the support, or the bare neutrality of any European Power, it stands to reason that they would abstain from the commission or toleration of acts which must necessarily, and to everybody's knowledge, alienate from Turkey all European sympathy. On the other hand, if they believed all Europe to be in league against them—if they believed that there was a combination of all the Christian Powers to drive them back to Asia—that would be exactly the circumstance which would lead them to break out into excesses prompted by revenge and despair—outbreaks such as are abstained from even by savage races so long as they have anything to lose, but which they indulge in freely when they know their cause is hopeless—that everything is lost, and that they have nothing more to look to except the gratification of revenge.

Now, I fully believe, as I have said before, and as I repeat again, that the conviction—so far as that conviction existed—that England only wished to see fair play between the con-

tending parties has done more than any other circumstance to prevent this unfortunate war from assuming the character of a religious war, and to prevent the commission of acts like those of which we have been speaking in many provinces and to confine them instead to one.

I have heard a remark by a gentleman who spoke just now—I do not know whether it is worth notice—that we were especially responsible for Turkey, and that we had become surety for her. I do not exactly understand on what that assertion is based. We did not make the Crimean War alone—we made it in concert with France. It was, no doubt, a popular war in this country, but everybody knows that the Power which mainly pushed on the war in the beginning was our ally France, under the Government of the late Emperor. I do not know that that is very material, but I must protest, on the part of the Government, against its being considered that we hold an exceptional and peculiar position in regard to Turkey.

It is a minor matter to deal with, but I have seen it asked why—when these things were happening around Philippopoli—why did our officials fail to report them at once, so that we might interfere in time? My answer is simply that it was a mere accident that these massacres took place in that particular district; they might just as well have taken place in any other locality where an insurrection had been expected or had broken out. We cannot have consuls in every town in Turkey, and, as a matter of fact, the district in which these acts took place is one where there are no British residents to protect and no British interests to serve. And this also I may say, though I do not want to make a single remark that might appear to give a party construction to my words: if ten years before this we had had a British consul at Philippopoli, I am quite sure that, in the exercise of that zeal—which I, for one, consider very laudable—for economy in the public service, that consul would not have been left by our predecessors on the list; and I am bound to say that, under the circumstances, they would have been quite right in

striking off his name. The real history of the massacres, as I understand it, is that they took place at a moment when there was entire anarchy prevailing at Constantinople. The Sultan was notoriously insane; a revolution was known to be impending; ministers and officials of all kinds, from those who held high office at Constantinople down to local pashas and minor officials in all the provinces, had been so repeatedly turned out and shifted from post to post—very often not remaining in the same place for more than a fortnight or three weeks—that all authority was in abeyance; in fact, the country was in a condition of administrative anarchy.

Sir Henry Elliot, to my knowledge—it appears partly in the Blue Book, but I know also that for one recommendation he recorded he has made a dozen of which there is no official record—had again and again warned those in power of the extreme danger arising from the employment of irregular troops; but regular troops were few. At this particular time, as I tell you, there was practically no one who was responsible for the exercise of authority, and these irregulars were levied and recruited in all directions without any care to subject them to proper discipline.

We are bound to give everybody their due; and though I do not at all acquit the Government of the Porte of being culpably negligent and remiss in taking cognisance of these cruelties, still, as far as I can learn from information in my possession, it is not the truth that they were in any sense encouraged by the officials in Constantinople. I believe those who were in power at Constantinople had quite sense enough to know the enormous mischief these crimes would do; and that, from a selfish point of view, if from no other, they would give no countenance to acts which could only serve to complicate their position.

I do not know that I need detain you longer with regard to past transactions. As to them, I shall only say that, upon the part of the Government, we do not come before the public, and we shall not come before Parliament, in the position of persons who have anything to unsay of what they have said

in the past, or anything to regret in what they have done. In the three acts of this Eastern drama, so far as it has gone—in the acceptance of the Austrian Note, in the rejection of the Berlin Memorandum, and in the sending of the British fleet to Besika Bay—the country, as I believe, almost unanimously concurred. These acts were laid, with all necessary explanation, before Parliament, and they were concurred in, I venture to say, by all except a small minority. And I cannot see that the justification of any one of them is affected in the slightest degree by the subsequent coming to light of transactions of which we had no knowledge; of which, at the time, we could know absolutely nothing; and which, as I have already explained to you, horrible and detestable as they were, were due rather to the weakness than to the will of the Turkish Government.

I ought to apologise for dwelling so long on this subject; but if you saw the correspondence I daily receive—to say nothing of the language held at public meetings—you would begin to think, as I certainly do, that there are a great many people in England who fancy that Lord Beaconsfield is the Sultan and that I am the Grand Vizier. With regard to acts connected with the internal administration of Turkey, we have exactly the same rights that are possessed by every other great Power, neither more nor less; and I do not learn that in France, or Austria, or Italy, or Germany, people are crying out as they do here, and denouncing their Government as being in complicity with those answerable for these atrocities. Now, let me remind you what has been the attitude taken throughout, and not only by the present Cabinet, but by our predecessors, in regard to this Turkish question. I think there is a good deal of confusion in the public mind between two things which are essentially distinct. One is the question of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and the other the relationship between the Government of Turkey and the various races of which that Empire is composed. Many people—you, I think, judiciously abstained from holding language of that kind—but there are many people who ask

us to abandon the practice of the last fifty or sixty years, to wash our hands of the whole affair, and let the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire take care of itself. I am bound to speak frankly, and I say I think that would be a mistake as much now as at any former time.

The reasons which have always hitherto induced us to set value upon the territorial integrity of Turkey are real and permanent. The last word of the Eastern question is this: 'Who is to have Constantinople?' No great Power would be willing to see it in the hands of any other great Power. No small Power could hold it at all. And as for joint occupation and other ingenious schemes of that kind, they are, at best, dangerous and doubtful expedients. You will see that that is a question not in any way affected by the insanity of a Sultan, by the misconduct of the Turkish Administration, or by the crimes committed by Turkish troops. Any attempt at partition would, in all probability, be the signal for a European war; at any rate, it could not take place without most imminent risk of bringing about such a war; and I hold, therefore, that it is sound policy now, as much as twenty years ago, to adhere to that which diplomatists call the territorial *status quo*. It is possible that the language which is being held in England now may induce foreign politicians and foreign Governments to think that England has changed her mind on the subject, and if that impression is produced I think it will be a misfortune to us and all the world.

But as to the relations of the various races in the Turkish Empire to the Government of Turkey, that is an entirely different question. They have been repeatedly modified within the last few years, and possibly may be modified again. The Turkish Empire, as I need not tell you, is not a homogeneous whole. Egypt has one constitution, the district of the Lebanon has another of a peculiar character, and Crete has a system of local self-government of its own which works perfectly well, the only complaint that I have heard in regard to it being, not that the constitution is not sufficiently liberal and just, but that its provisions have not

been duly observed. I need not refer to Servia and Roumania, because you know the situation of these provinces. But I may say this, that every one of these arrangements has been settled with the concurrence more or less of the guaranteeing Powers. I am quite sure, also, that you will not find a word uttered by me, or by any of my colleagues —nor, I believe, by those who preceded me in office—which tends to show hostility on our part in principle to any further extension of these constitutional changes—to any further extension of them which the circumstances may render necessary. In point of fact, one of the last that took place was the abandonment by the Porte of its right to keep a garrison in Belgrade. That change was brought about by the united action of the Powers in 1867. The Government of this country was then a consenting party, and I had to do with that arrangement, holding then the office which I hold now. Nor have we objected in practice to modifications, such as I speak of, being extended beyond the limits in which they have taken place. But we must remember that we are dealing with Turkey, and not with England; and, for my own part, I never will be guilty of the quackery of putting my name to a scheme merely because it has a plausible appearance and looks well on paper, but which I believe in my conscience will not work.

So much, then, for what has been said of the relationship of the present Government to the Christian races in the East. When, shortly before the war broke out, I was asked in the House of Lords what would be our course of policy with respect to Servia, I said that, as between the insurgents and the Government, our line of conduct would be one of strict neutrality so long as the war lasted, and of mediation as soon as mediation became possible. That is the course which we took also with respect to Bosnia and the Herzegovina. And when, only the other day, just before the close of the Session, I was asked by a foreign diplomatist what we should have to say to a proposal of what he called 'adminis-

trative autonomy' in these provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I gave an answer, which you will find, if you look for it, in the Blue Book, to the effect that, in point of principle and policy, we, the British Government, saw no objection to such an arrangement, although, at the same time, I mentioned that there were various difficulties, of an internal and local character, to which I knew those who were best acquainted with the state of the facts attached the greatest importance, and till we saw the way to get over these difficulties we were not prepared to commit ourselves to any scheme. If, therefore, any one says that, as between the Christian races inhabiting Turkey and the governing power of Turkey, our policy has been one of hostility to those races, I say that is a charge which I defy him to prove by any word uttered by me or by my colleagues.

As to the future, we are doing all in our power to bring about an armistice in the first instance, and peace as soon as may be. In that respect, I think, I am able to say that all the Powers of Europe are cordially united. As to the subsequent arrangements that may be made, they must depend upon the concerted action of all Europe, and I am sure you will understand that the nature of them is not a subject into which it is possible for me to go now. For those unfortunate Bulgarians who have suffered so much, they have no doubt a right to such reparation as it is now possible to make. They have a right also—an undoubted right—to the signal, conspicuous, and exemplary punishment of those who have been the offenders; and I think they may also fairly claim from Europe that in one manner or another we shall take steps such as may secure them from a recurrence of similar outrages.

For the general question, if I were speaking to men who take a less calm and rational view of the situation than you seem to do, I should entreat them to remember that if humanity is a virtue which nobody doubts, justice is also a virtue. And I would tell them that it is not reasonable or

just—to say nothing of prudential considerations—to denounce a whole race, or to denounce all those who hold the Mahommedan religion—for the Mahommedans of Turkey are composed of various races—as I am sorry to say I have heard them denounced often of late, in language which would be hardly justifiable if applied to criminals in our gaols. A gentleman said to-day, 'Let Turkey be blotted out of the map of Europe.' And he only repeated what has often been said of late: 'Turn out the Turks.' Well, but do you suppose they will go without a struggle? Do you believe you could bring about a revolution of that kind without a religious war?—a war which would excite feelings of fanaticism between the two races to the very highest pitch, and in the course of which, in all probability (if the thing is to be done by sheer force), you would have massacres and crimes committed, compared to which those in Bulgaria would be mere trifles? And, recollect, even if that result, at whatever cost, were accomplished—even if no Turkish Government were left remaining anywhere in Europe—still the problem—the Mahommedan problem—would not be solved. Whether you like it or not—whether you wish it or not, there will still be in Asia—I do not speak of India—but there will be in Turkish Asia many millions of Christians and Mahommedans living mixed together, and who must of necessity so remain. I do not think we could do these Eastern Christians a worse service, or do anything more calculated to prejudice their position, than if, in any however well-meant and kindly feeling towards them or in natural resentment arising out of the atrocities that have been committed, we were to hold language and display feeling against the whole of the Mahommedan races of Turkey such as would excite and keep alive that mutual animosity between the two religions which it is our object to diminish as much as possible.

Say all you will—and you can hardly say too much—in regard to those who have been guilty; but do not let us confound the innocent with the guilty. Let me add, do not

suppose that because we here look at this question mainly, if not purely, from a philanthropic point of view—do not suppose all foreign Powers and foreign politicians are looking at it exclusively from the same point of view. As a sequel to that, I would warn you further, do not ask your Government to do that which is impossible, because if you take that course you will put it out of our power to do anything at all.

XLIII

THE EASTERN QUESTION—IMPOSSIBLE AND POSSIBLE POLICIES

FOREIGN OFFICE, LONDON: SEPTEMBER 23, 1876

[LORD DERBY first spoke as to the punishment of those who were responsible for the Bulgarian atrocities, and next as to the summoning of Parliament.]

Now, gentlemen, as to the much wider question—the question of general policy which you have raised—I am afraid I must begin by saying, with the frankness which I think you will wish me to use, that I cannot agree to the doctrine set forth in one passage of the Address to the Queen—that the ill-usage of Eastern Christians by Mahommedans or by the Turkish Government is due to the fact that English support has been given to the Porte. I should look at matters from an exactly opposite point of view. So long as it was thought in Europe, as for some centuries it was thought, a religious duty to make war upon Turks, so long Christian races which were in any manner subject to Turkish domination might naturally expect ill-usage. Intolerance is not confined to any nation or to any creed, and the less we show of it ourselves the stronger our hands will be and the freer our consciences will be in repressing manifestations of it elsewhere. However, this is a remark which I make only in passing. I think, if this were the time or the place, it would not be difficult to show that there never has been a moment since the Crimean War when English influence has not been used to detect or point out instances of misgovernment in Turkey. I deny utterly the theory that we have been in favour of the Turks as against the Christians.

We have been in favour of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire; but, as I have explained, or endeavoured to explain, in this room before to another audience, that is an entirely different matter. If, as no doubt is true, things have grown worse rather than better within the last year or so, I do not think you have got far to look for the causes which have produced that result. With an insane Sovereign, with a bankrupt Treasury, with a civil war widely extended, and to a considerable extent supported from abroad, with Ministers and officials shifted in the most arbitrary and capricious manner from post to post at a day's notice, it is really not too much to say that the state of Turkey, during the last year or so, has been almost one of administrative anarchy, in which nearly every function of government has been in abeyance.

But the real question is, What do you want us to do? I am very grateful to gentlemen who say they do not wish to tie the hands of the Government, and who disclaim all idea of dictating to us the policy which we ought to pursue. But I may add, in all courtesy to them, that if they were to attempt to dictate to us in detail the policy which we ought to pursue, I should expect them to find the task one of much greater difficulty than that of exposing — what nobody doubts—the many instances of misgovernment and oppression which may be found under Turkish rule. Various plans have been put before the public. One, which I think I may mention only to put aside, is that which, if I do not misunderstand it, Mr. Lowe put forward, or rather supported, in a recent speech at Croydon. That is the plan of simply washing our hands of the whole affair and letting the Turkish Empire drift where it pleases. Now, I think it is quite a sufficient answer to a proposition of that kind to say that if we were to act upon it in practice, and if, as the result of our abstention, an internecine war, marked by every circumstance of cruelty and atrocity, were to follow, the public feeling of the country—the feeling which has been so strongly excited by the events of the last few weeks, would make it impossible

for us to persevere in such a policy. I say nothing of what might happen at Constantinople, because I know that, at this moment, for an English Minister to talk of 'English interests' in connection with the Eastern question is to use a very unpopular phrase. But the first requisite for a policy is that it shall be practicable, and leaving the Eastern question to settle itself is not, as matters stand, practicable or desirable. Then comes a second proposal. It is one which has undoubtedly found wide and general acceptance in this country, and has been eagerly, and even vehemently, supported by many eminent persons. It is to turn the Turks as a governing Power altogether out of Europe, leaving them a nominal suzerainty and fixed tribute, but nothing more. Now, perhaps you will hear me with patience while I make one or two comments upon that proposal.

In the first place, if the policy which you there indicate is a sound policy, I do not see why you are to be arrested by the arbitrary geographical line you have drawn. If it is a fact that government by the Porte, however modified or however controlled, is utterly and incurably bad—if, I say, that is the view you take, I do not understand why you so entirely ignore the claims of those several millions of Christians who inhabit the Asiatic provinces of the Turkish Empire. I do not know why your interposition is to end at Constantinople; and yet nobody, as far as I have heard, has proposed to do anything for those of whom I speak. But there is something more. You cannot, as reasonable men, suppose that the Government of the Porte will commit political suicide. You cannot suppose that it would willingly and without resistance allow itself to be turned out of Europe. Very well. Then you will be obliged to use force. [A voice: 'We do not object.'] You do not object? But who is to do it? [A voice: 'Russia.'] Who will be with you? I can tell you who will be against you. There is at least one European Power which I have no doubt would resist, even at the cost of war, the substitution of a Slavonic for a Turkish State. France, Germany, Italy would look on. Just now, when I said, 'Who will help

you?' a voice answered, 'Russia.' Well, the Russian Government has never proposed a change so sweeping; and although it is rather a delicate matter to speculate upon what the policy and conduct of a foreign Government might be in circumstances which have not arisen, I very much doubt whether Russian policy would be served by a change of that kind. You must recollect that, whatever we may be, foreign politicians and foreign Cabinets are not impulsive; they are not in the least likely to be drawn into a crusade of this kind unless they see clearly some national benefit which is likely to arise out of it. We should, therefore, according to the proposition which I am now discussing, and which I see finds much favour in this room, be left without an ally, and with at least one European opponent, to undo by force our own work of twenty years ago, with all Europe perplexed at the suddenness of our change, and probably with every Continental politician ascribing to us some deep and incomprehensible plan of national aggrandisement.

I say nothing of other difficulties which would arise from the natural jealousy and conflict of races. I know it is a popular theory in England to suppose that all the Christian races of European Turkey are a homogeneous whole, and sure to agree with one another. But nothing can be further from the fact. You have a deep religious antipathy between the Roman Catholics, who are a rather numerous body, and the Greek Church; and you have the strongest possible jealousy between the Greeks and the Slavonic races. You have, scattered throughout European Turkey, a minority—but still a powerful and influential, and, if pushed to extremity, a very determined minority—of Mahommedans; and I leave you to judge what would be the result of a civil war carried on over such an area of country—what would be the massacres, what would be the atrocities, what would be the amount of crime committed and of blood shed before the object you desire could be attained. I am speaking, of course, of the change which we are discussing being made by violent means, because I assume it as a thing which requires

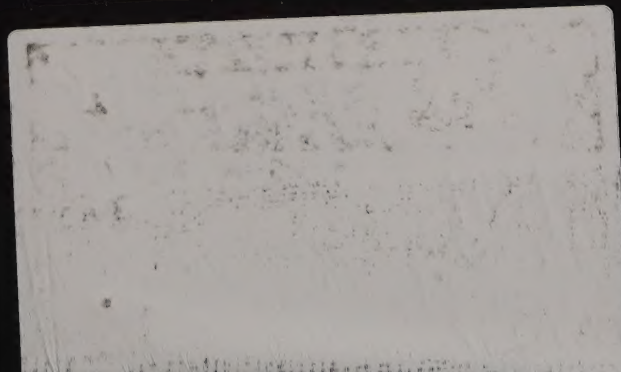
no proof that if not made by force it will not in our time be made at all. Well, for the reasons which I have given, and partly also because it is a difficult thing to bring men in a semi-civilised condition, men of different races and creeds, and wholly new to the duties of self-government, to work together without any central control, I confess that I look upon the plan of complete autonomy—the plan, that is, of creating a fresh group of tributary States—as one outside the range of practical politics. There is not a single Government in Europe, whatever its sympathies and whatever its ideas, which has at any time proposed or entertained that scheme; and if I were now to propose it I am convinced that we should stand alone. [A voice: 'Then let us.'] Here I may advert to an observation which fell from a respected friend of mine upon this subject. He was for establishing this system of complete autonomy—that is, of complete practical independence—north of the Balkan; but he stopped at that line. Now, I say of that, just as I say of plans which deal only with the Christians of European Turkey, excluding those of Asia, I do not understand, if you adopt such a policy, why that particular geographical limit should be drawn.

But, gentlemen, allow me to point out that there is a very wide difference between rejecting, as I do reject, that particular proposition as impracticable, and saying that things ought to remain as they were and as they are. It is quite possible, while rejecting the idea of political autonomy, to accept the idea of local or administrative autonomy. I do not particularly like the phrase. It is not an English phrase. It is very vague and elastic in meaning, and for my part I much prefer the plain English phrase of local self-government. But I take the word as I find it, and I think in that direction we may look for a possible and practical solution. Every country has in one way or another to solve the problem of reconciling central authority with local institutions, and I believe the best of the Turks themselves are aware that their system of extreme and despotic centralisation—a system carried to its height only in recent times, and

imported from Europe—has been to them a misfortune and a mistake. I do not conceal from you or from myself that to bring about reforms in the sense I have indicated will be a difficult task, though it will not be so difficult to bring them about as to make them work when they are brought about. But I believe it can be done, and I am sure it ought to be tried. I have referred on former occasions to forms of local government and the kind of local constitution given to Crete and the Lebanon, though I never referred to them as indicating the exact model which ought to be copied, but merely as giving illustrations of a commencement in that direction, which, as far as it has gone, has worked in a satisfactory manner. I am quite aware that what I have said to you is very vague and general. But I am afraid it is not in my power to satisfy your very natural desire for a statement which shall be more definite and more detailed. You must recollect that we have six Governments who must be induced to work together. We must have united action, because if we have not union we shall have no action at all; and being, as unfortunately I am, in a position in which every word I utter upon an occasion like this is watched and weighed, you will understand that I am bound to be more than ordinarily careful not to create expectations which, by no fault of mine, and whatever my personal wish might be, I should find myself unable to realise. Equal treatment to Mahommedan and Christian; better administration for both; security for life and property; effectual guarantees against a repetition of such outrages as those which all Europe has seen with so much disgust—these are practical objects, and for these objects we shall labour. I do not at all wish to disguise the fact that what has happened in Bulgaria has to a certain extent changed the position not only of our own Government, but of every European Government, in regard to Turkey and the East of Europe.

As regards the two belligerents, Servia and Montenegro, I do not think it necessary or desirable that I should express any opinion as to the merits of the quarrel in which they are

engaged. When parties appeal to arms, the solution which follows is to a considerable extent independent of the merits of the original dispute. But looking to the military position, I think that, no decisive success having been obtained on either side, both parties may fairly and honourably treat the matter as a drawn game, and return to the *status quo*. We could hardly ask for concessions from Turkey for enemies who have been defeated; and, on the other hand, I am sure that the wisest as well as the most generous policy on the part of the Porte, and of those who in any degree control the action of the Porte, is to abstain from pressing for any penalty on an unsuccessful opponent. I cannot tell you that peace is absolutely decided, but I may say that the dispositions on all sides are favourable; and, for my own part, I not only hope, but confidently believe, that we shall see this quarrel brought to an end without any further effusion of blood. Now, gentlemen, I think I have stated as fully as, in the circumstances, is convenient or possible my views on the general subject. I will end with only one remark. Do not imagine that you can settle this Eastern question by merely saying what you wish to be done. The question is not what you wish to be done but what, in the circumstances, can be done.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

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